Introduction to Kitab al-Irshad

Author: Muhammad Rida Ja'fari

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point

This text is an introduction to Kitab al-Irshad written by Shaykh al-Mufid which covers .the topics of Imamate and the different Shi'ah Sects

Al-Irshad

point

In his biography of ash-Shaykhu 'l-Mufid, Dr. Howard, the translator of Kitab al-Irshad (The Book of Guidance), has reviewed the intellectual and social aspects of the author's life. On our part, we also have done so in the biographies of the Shi'ah Imamiyyah theologians in the introduction to the English translation of "Kitabu 't-.Tawhid" of Usul al-Kafi

Therefore, we shall neither repeat anything here nor comment on what Dr. Howard has written – in spite of some points of disagreement that we have with him – because such differences can be seen by comparing the two discussions here, however, we shall only comment on some important points related to the book, al-.Irshad, itself

The Name of the Book

The title of the book "al-Irshad" has been mentioned without any genitive construction in both al- Fihrist of ash-Shaykhu’t-Tusi and al-Fihrist of an-Najashi (۱) as well as in most of the later sources(۲) that apparently followed the former two .bibliographical works. This is how al-Irshad became the famous title for the book

However, in many ancient and later references, and also in many manuscript copies of the book, the title appears in a more complete form as al-Irshad fi ma‘rifat hujaji 'llah ‘ala 'l-‘ibad. The same title also appears in the ijazah

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۱- at-Tusi, al-Fihrist, p.۱۸۷; an-Najashi, al-Fihrist, p.۳۱۱.

۲- Ibn Shahrashub, Ma‘alimu 'l-‘ulama’, p.۱۰۱; al-Quhba’i, Ma‘jma‘u 'r- rijal, vol.۶, pp.۳۳-۳۴; al-Hurr al-‘Amili, Wasailu 'sh-Shi‘ah, vol.۲۰, p.۴۳;

permission) for narrating the book issued by the famous Imami traditionalist,) Rashidu'd-Din, Abu Ja'far, Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn Shahrashub as- Sarawi al-Mazandarani (۴۸۹/۱۰۹۶–۵۸۸/۱۱۹۲)(۱) for as-Sayyid Muhyi 'd-Din, Muhammad ibn 'Abdillah ibn 'Ali ibn Zuhrah al- Husayni al-Halabi (۵۶۶/۱۱۷۱–۶۳۶/۱۲۳۹)(۲).

Similarly, the full title appears in another ijazah given to al-Halabi by the famous Shi'ah jurist, ash-Shaykh Abu Ja'far, Muhammad ibn Idris al- Hilli (۵۴۳/۱۱۴۸ – ۵۹۸/۱۲۰۲).The author (r.a.)(۳), himself has not described the title in the book; yet the longer title is descriptive of the purpose for which the book was written as mentioned in the author's introduction.

The Readership

Al-Irshad was written for the lay reader- ship, according to their requirements, and in a form appropriate for the general level of education prevailing at al-Mufid's time so that every reader and listener may benefit from it. Therefore, the writer (r.a.) was bound to write in brief and to the point as he himself has mentioned in the introduction, the epilogue and at various other places in the book.

The only style adopted by the author is of description and narration – just as the historical events are described in books of history and just as the ahadith are narrated in the books of hadith – without providing, for what he has written, any proof or evidence except by quoting hadith and history. This is the style to which every reader and every listener's mind is moulded.

Indeed, the writer (r.a.), succeeded in his objective, since the book al-Irshad – although written a thousand

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۱- al-Majlisi, al-Bihar, vol.۱۰۷, p.۱۵۶.

۲- Ibid, vol.۱۰۹, p.۴۴. The same title also appears in adh-Dhari'ah, vol.۱۰, pp.۵۰۹-۱۰; the introduction by as-Sayyid Hasan al-Khirsan to Tahdhibu 'l-ahkam, (an-Najaf al-Ashraf [Iraq] edition), vol.۱, p.۲۲; Brockelmann, Tarikhu't-turathi 'l-'Arabi, (Arabic transl.),

vol.١٢, p.٢٧٨. The last two references have mentioned numerous manuscripts of al-Irshad.

٣- Rahimahu 'llah, i.e., May Allah have mercy upon him.

years ago – has became one of the important sources for oratory in Imamiyyah gatherings, especially in the memorial ceremonies for the Master of the Martyrs, al-Imam al-Husayn ibn ‘Ali (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him and all those who sacrificed their lives with him). Even today, the lecturers and the orators of the maqtal(۱) depend on it, at times even read directly from it. May Allah reward the !writer on our behalf – the community of Imamiyyah – with the best of His rewards

This is the reason why the writer (r.a.), did not resort to the polemical and theological style of writing which relies on rational arguments and scientific terminology – from philosophy, theology and the principles of jurisprudence – which cannot be complete without going into details, identifying the weak points, highlighting the ambiguous aspects, quoting differing views for each issue that he propounds, analyzing them and preferring one view and refuting the other as is the common practice of the .theological and philosophical studies

In short, the author (r.a.), has refrained from the theological style of writing; and, therefore, it would not be correct to consider the book as anything but a reflection of ash-Shaykhu 'l-Mufid's perspective in history and hadith; it cannot be considered as a sample of his theological and polemical style of writing. In the following pages, we shall mention some examples clarifying the difference between the style he has adopted in this book and the style of theologians he

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۱- Narration of the martydoms of al-Imam al-Husayn's (‘a.s.), and his companions

.has adopted elsewhere when discussing the same issue

In order to combine the style of relying on the narration without analyzing them minutely or without employing pro- found rational thinking, on the one hand, and the exercise of convincing the reader about the validity of the narration, on the other hand, ash-Shaykhu 'l-Mufid has relied in his narration of the lives of the Imams (‘a.s.)(١), and their distinctive characteristics in most instances on what has been .mentioned by the neutral historians and biographers

I do not say that the attribute of neutrality can be applied to all of them and to all that they narrate, nor do I claim that the accusation of partiality and sectarian bias in presenting historical events for religious or political motivations are applicable to the sources not used by al-Mufid. I leave aside this discussion about the affiliations of the historians, narrators and jurists to the rulers, and that they choose to ignore whatever the rulers wanted to be ignored and that they presented favourably .whatever the rulers wanted to be presented favorably

At this stage, I would just like to state that the biased and official historians have ignored the lives of the later Imams of Ahlu 'l-bayt (‘a.s.), except where the events were connected to the rulers and the caliphs. This is the reason why ash-Shaykhu 'l-Mufid was compelled to rely on the Shi‘ah Imamiyyah narrators when discussing the .Imams of Ahlu 'l-bayt (‘a.s.), who came after the first Islamic century

The style of brevity which

١- ‘Alayhi/‘alayha/‘alayhima or ‘alayhimu 's-salam (i.e., Peace be upon him/her or them)

al-Mufid has imposed on him- self in al-Irshad has compelled him in many instances to rely on a single historian whom he has chosen against the others without giving reasons for his preference as a source for that particular event. This is so even in cases where there is a difference among the historians on that particular issue, for instance, when he mentions the death of al-Imam Musa al-Kazim (‘a.s.) in which he has relied entirely on Abu 'l-Faraj al-Isbahani. This is one of the objectionable points raised by the respected translator against the writer. Moreover, Abu 'l-Faraj is considered closer than others to neutrality by the opponents of the Imamiy- yah, and .he is not accused by them of sectarian bias

If I may say so, the translator himself was also acting under the same self-imposed restriction when he mentions in his foot- note (p.۲۷۵) only one source for the event of Ghadir Khumm, that is, al-Baladhuri. Any scholar slightly familiar with hadith, islamic history and the discourses on imamate knows that very few events in the history of Islam and very few ahadith among the prophetic narration on imamate or the life of Amiru 'l- Mu’minin ‘Ali (‘a.s.) have received that much attention at the hand of Muslim scholars and theologians (the Shi‘ahs and the Sunnis alike) as the event of Ghadir .Khumm

It would suffice to know the books written by the Muslim scholars and traditionalists sunni and shi‘ah alike on this subject; the latest and most important of

all works on this issue is al-Ghadir fi 'l-Kitab wa 's-Sunnah wa 'l-Adab by one of the contemporary Shi‘ah scholar ash-Shaykh ‘Abdu 'l-Husayn ibn Ahmad al-Amini an-Najafi (۱۳۲۰/۱۹۰۲–۱۳۹۰/۱۹۷۰) of which eleven volumes have already been published, and .the work is not yet complete

Ash- Shaykh al-Amini has dedicated the first volume to the text of hadithu 'l-Ghadir and its narrators from our Sunni brethren and their scholars who number hundred and ten companions (ashab) of the Prophet, eighty-five disciples (tabi‘in) of the companions and about four hundred scholars of hadith and history over the thirteen .Islamic centuries after the first century of the companions and their disciples

The style of brevity and strict adherence to its objective also defined the contents of the book, and that is why al-Mufid does not narrate the life of the Holy Prophet (s.‘a.w.a.)(۱) or the life of Fatimatu 'z-Zahra’ (‘a.s.). Otherwise, the lives of these two personalities are inseparable from any discourse about the lives of the Imams as can be observed in what has been done by al- Kulayni in "Kitabu 'l-Hujjah" of Usul al-Kafi; by at-Tabrisi in I‘lamu 'l-wara bi a‘lami 'l-huda; by al-Irbiliyy in Kashfu 'l- ghummah fi ma‘rifati 'l-aimmah; and by al-‘Allamah as-Sayyid Muhsin al-Amin in his A‘yanu 'sh-.Shi‘ah

Imamate

Definition of Imamate

In the views of the Shi‘ah Imamiyyah, there are two sources to define the theological concept of imamate and its characteristics: The first source is the

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۱ - Salla 'llahu ‘alayi wa alih (i.e., May the blessing of Allah be upon him and his .(progeny

Holy Qur'an and the noble Sunnah narrated by reliable sources. This is the more trustworthy and reliable source; nay, it is the basis for the second source itself. The second source is whatever has come in the Shi'ah theological books concerning the .definition of imamate and its conditions

However the ahadith about imamate have propounded the issue in so much detail defining the meaning of imamate and the qualities of an imam that it becomes difficult, nay impossible, to derive a brief and concise definition of imamate encomia passing all its necessary elements(1). I have, therefore, preferred to quote from the .specific books of theology

The Imamiyyah theologians have defined imamate as "a universal and direct ".(authority bestowed by God to a particular person in religious and worldly matters(2

Conditions for an Imam

The foundation of imamate depends on divine appointment found in a divine text in the Holy Qur'an or in the confirmed prophetic traditions of the Messenger of Allah (s.'a.w.a.). For the Imamiyyah, imamate is a divine position like prophethood; it cannot be vested except upon one who has been appointed by the Almighty Allah as a .prophet or an imam

.(And your Lord creates and chooses whom He pleases; to choose is not theirs; (28:68

.(Allah knows best where to place His message. (6:124

The Almighty Allah is Aware of His servants, knows what their hearts conceal and what they portray; He is the Wise who neither engages in amusement nor creates without a purpose. Allah does not choose a messenger unless all the

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1 - See "Kitabu 'l-Hujjah" in Usul al-Kafi; Basairu'd-darajat of as-Saffar and the .numerous volumes on imamate in al-Bihar

2 - - See al-Alfayn, p.2; Nahju 'l-mustarshidin, p.62; Qawa'idu 'l-maram, p.174; al-

.Lawami‘u 'l–Ilahiyyah, p.۲۵۴

necessary conditions and qualities for carrying the divine message are found in him for his entire life. So is the case of imamate in view of the Imamiyyah except for one difference which distinguishes the Imam from the Messenger: The later receives the shari'ah from the Almighty Allah directly whereas the former receives it from the latter only and not through the direct divine revelation.

The qualities of an imam according to the Imamiyyah are as follows:

i.Infallibility (al-'ismah): Divine protection from sins and from failure in fulfilling the obligations, a protection which prevents the person from forgetfulness and mistakes in conveying the message, implementing the divine laws, and guiding the people.

ii. He should be the best person in his time in all virtues.

iii. He should be knowledgeable about the shari'ah in all its scopes and dimensions. He should also be an expert in managing the ummah, with insight in regulating its affairs, and capable of leading and guiding it.

iv. He should be the most brave and courageous person of his time. The kind of courage, which is necessary to lead the ummah at war as well as in peace. He should also be the wisest of all in regard to the ummah's interest, and the most conscious of the needs and the demands of its members in their personal and social life.

v. There should be, in the Imam, no blemish physical or moral, in lineage or descent which would prevent him from commanding total control over the various elements of the

.ummah and from subjugating them completely to his divine leadership

:The imamate as defined above is established through

,(i) A clear text (an-nass

ii) Performance of miracles (mu'jizah), which clearly proves the divine link that would, in turn, proves a divine position for the performer. The numbers of the imams, the identifying process for each one of them, and their relationship to one another (e.g., one is the father and the other is the son; or one is the brother of the other) depends .(on the nass only(١

The conditions for Imamate and the Imam have not been selected arbitrarily; rather, there must be a rational proof or a clear and definite religious text which proves that this or that condition is essential for establishing the Divine Leadership (imamate) and that without it the imamate is not complete. The scholars in line with this basic .principle outline the conditions mentioned above

All other conditions and qualifications are either non-essential in the view of the Imamiyyah or they are special characteristics of the Imams, which the Almighty Allah has bestowed upon them as a mark of honor and status for them. They do not form .the general and necessary conditions for imamate

Examples of conditions which are not considered essential i.e., the conditions not proven by a rational proof or a clear and definite religious text for imamate is that an imam must have a successor from his own children or that the imamate cannot go except to his son or that only son

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On this subject, refer to al-Mufid, al-Ifsah fi imamat Amiri 'l-Mu'minin'alayhi 's- - ١ salam, Awailu 'l-maqalat, Tashihu 'l-i'tiqad; as-Saduq, I'tiqadatu'l-Imamiyyah; at-Tusi, al-Iqtisadu 'l-hadi ila 'r-rashad, Talkhisu 'sh-Shafi, (especially its first volume); as-Sayyid al-Murtada, ash-Shafi; Nasiru 'd-Din at-Tusi, Tajridu 'l-i'tiqad, and its

commentary known as Kashfu 'l-murad by al-'Allamah al-Hilli, and also the references mentioned under the definition of imamate

.of an imam can succeed an imam

These are not essential conditions for imamate because imamate depends on the nass. So, for example, if there is a nass, which says that, the imam after al-Hasan (‘a.s.) is al- Husayn (‘a.s.), then the presence of al-Imam al-Hasan's sons does not prevent his brother from the position of imamate; similarly, it would not even prevent .the transferring of imamate to al-Husayn's children or descendants

Another such example is of a supposed condition that the Imam must be the eldest son of his father. This is also not an essential condition because, just as prophethood, imamate depends on the nass; so if there is a nass for a particular person then it is obligatory to go by the nass even if that person is not the eldest of his father's sons. We shall point out some real examples of this kind when we talk about the .Isma‘iliyyah and the Fatahiyyah

An-Nassu 'l-Jaliyy and an-Nassu 'l-Khafiyy: Certain terminologies exist in the Imamiyyah books on imamate, which do not have any positive meaning to the Imamiyyah themselves. The Imamiyyah mentions these terminologies only because they have a positive meaning in the view of the non-Imamiyyah. This is not, however, restricted to the discussion of imamate; rather, it is found in other theological subjects .also like in at-tawhid and an-nubuwwah

Examples of such terminologies are an-nassul-jaliyy (obvious nass) and an-nassu'l-khafiyy (concealed nass). The nass, according to the Imamiyyah, as discussed in Usulu'l-Fiqh (the Principles of Jurisprudence) of both the

Shi'ahs and the Sunnis and used in their theological books, means "a statement which has only one meaning that cannot be interpreted otherwise and which creates certainty in the mind of the listener about the intention of the speaker in clear terms ".without any doubt or ambiguity in it

So the nass, in this definition, can only be obvious (jaliyy) and clear in its meaning, which cannot accommodate any other interpretation or explanation. This is so, if al-jaliyy means a meaning, which is obvious and clear; and al-khafiyy means a meaning, which is concealed and ambiguous. If al-jaliyy, however, means a nass which is clear for all people in general in the sense that the nass had been heard and received by the people so that there is no room for doubt in its occurrence; and al- khafiyy means a nass which is concealed from the people in general and heard only by a few selected .persons

If this is the meaning of al-jaliyy and al-khafiyy – then it has no relevance for the Imamiyyah because they say that the nass for Amiru 'l-Mu'minin 'Ali ('a.s.) the first Divine Imam as well as the father of the Imams ('a.s.) and their foremost in sequence was a clear nass (al-jaliyy) heard by the Muslims in general. Referring to the traditions narrated by the Imamiyyah and others on the event of Ghadir will suffice to prove this .point

Add to this the fact that if the nass is khafiyy in the sense that only

a few people heard it and then these few people narrated it to others creating certainty about its authenticity, this will not harm the fact that it was stated during circumstances when only a few people were able to hear it, because fear of the hypocrites or persecution by the rulers can force the Prophet or the Imam not to reveal the nass except to a selected few whose narration of the nass, at a later stage, would create conviction in the minds of the people about its occurrence and leave no .room for doubts and suspicions about its authenticity

But the non-Imamiyyah, including some of the Zaydiyyah sects, has divided the nass about the imamate of Amiru 'l- Mu'minin 'Ali ('a.s.) into an-nassu 'l-jaliyy and an-nassu :'l- khafiyy. They have taken an-nassu 'l-khafiyy in both the above meanings

.i) That it was concealed from the Muslims in general and heard only by a few persons

ii) That it is liable to interpretation and explanation, leading the person who interprets and explains it to practically violate the injunction embedded within the text (nass). They also adhere to the belief that the nass on the imamate of 'Ali ('a.s.) was of the second type, an-nassu 'l- khafiyy; and, therefore, they do not consider those who have opposed the nass as those who have betrayed and opposed Allah and His Messenger, nor transgressed

their bounds or blantatly disobeyed the Messenger of Allah (s.'a.w.a.). In fact, the nass has been divided by these groups into jaliyy and khafiyy in order to defend others [who did not follow that nass] and not because they had doubts concerning the .(.imamate of Amiru 'l-Mu'minin 'Ali ('a.s

when the later Imamiyyah theologians wanted to prove the nass on the imamate of Amiru 'l-Mu'minin 'Ali ('a.s.) a binding nass which would compel a Muslim to follow it and which would leave no room for the excuse of not having heard it or for interpretation in its meaning they were faced with this dual division of nass and were forced to present their textual evidence as an-nassu 'l-jaliyy even if they did not .agree with the validity of this division of nass

This can be seen even in the present author, ash-Shaykhu 'l-Mufid (r.a.), who has a treatise entitled as Mas'alah fi 'n-nassi 'l-jaliyy 'ala imamat Amiri 'l- Mu'minin, 'alayhi 's-salam, printed in Baghdad in ١٣٧٥ AH. This is the reason why we do not see the term an-nassu 'l-jaliyy, based on the dual division of the nass, in the works of the Imamiyyah theologians of the first three Islamic centuries; it is only found in the .(writings of the later Imamiyyah theologians(١

We would most certainly like to draw the attention of our readers to the fact that many terminologies of non-Imamiyyah sects of Islam have entered into the

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See at-Tahrani, adh-Dhari'ah, vol.٢٠, p.٣٩٧; vol.٢٤, pp.١٧٢-۴ -١

writings of Imamiyyah scholars on theology as well as other subjects for the same reason that we have stated above. One more example of such terms is "imamatu 'l-afdal imamate of the most superior" and "imamatu 'l-mafdul imamate of the less ."superior

Shi'ah Sects

point

The sects that relate themselves to Shi'ism or the divisions, which occurred among - :the Shī'as themselves and made them into sub-sects fall into two categories

The First Category

point

The sects that call themselves "Shī'ah" but they differ from the Imamiyyah in the .meaning of imamate and its conditions

:The most important of these sects are

(Al-Ghulat (The Extremists

In defining the concept of imamate, al-Ghulat has gone to an extreme, which has .placed them outside the fold of the mainstream of Islam

Az-Zaydiyyah

The concept of imamate among the Zaydiyyah does not differ in general from the concept found among the non-Imamiyyah Muslims. They have deleted some essential conditions of imamate, and have added two conditions: (i) He must be a descendant of Fatimah (the daughter of the Holy Prophet); and (ii) He must stage an .armed movement to gain political power

The only argument that can be put forth to them is, first, regarding the concept and essence of imamate: Is imamate a divinely invested position in which the imam and his essential conditions cannot be defined except by Allah? Is there any religious text

indicating the imamate of any particular person? These are also other issues on which the Zaydiyyah is not in agreement with the non-Imamiyyah Muslims. So, the dispute is not just on

.the imamate of one person against the other

We shall not discuss this category of "Shi‘ah" sects because it is not our intention to discuss the history of Shi‘ah sects or to evaluate their opinions or argue about the .validity or otherwise of their beliefs

The Second Category

point

The second category refers to the sects that are in agreement with the Imamiyyah al-Ithna-‘ashariyyah (the Twelvers) in the general concept of imamate (as a divine position which is not assigned to anyone except by the unequivocal nass), and are in agreement with them in the characteristics and attributes of an imam in an inclusive way even though they may differ in some areas. We shall confine our discussion on - :this second category to three sects only

.a) The Isma‘iliyyah; b) The Fatahiyyah, and c) The Waqifah

What has prompted us, partially, to put this limitation in our discussion is that the respected translator(١) has apparently faced some ambiguity or has not been able to fully comprehend all aspects of the issue wherever ash-Shaykhu 'l-Mufid (r.a.), has talked, in his theological/polemical style, about these three sects, especially the Isma‘iliyyah. The translator, for example, makes the comment that: "al-Mufid takes great trouble to demonstrate that Ja‘far did not nominate Isma‘il . . ." (Intro. p.xxxi, ([[London's edition

We have already mentioned the justification of al-Mufid in the method that he has adopted in writing al-Irshad, but here we wish to elaborate, particularly, on the issue of

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١- Dr. I.K.A. Howard (The Book of Guidance) of Kitab al-Irshad.

Isma'il's imamate in order to dispel any wrong impression from the reader's mind when he reads the translator's introduction, especially the readers whose only .exposure to this issue would be whatever is in this book and its introduction

Moreover, the sects that affiliate them- selves to Shi'ism and those that have been mentioned in this book have almost all become extinct except the Zaydiyyah – who, as mentioned earlier, are to be discussed at a different level – and the Isma'iliyyah, which is still alive, with its numer- ous sub-sects, who, willingly or unwillingly, engage .in religious and theological confrontation from time to time

The Isma'iliyyah

Although the Isma'iliyyah has several sub-sects each calling itself a particular name or being given one, but all of them are in agreement on the issue of the imamate of Isma'il ibn al-Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq, peace be upon him, (no matter whether the imamate was actually bestowed upon him or that it was a nomin- ation which necessitated the transfer of imamate to his children) in particular, and on the issue of rejecting the imamate of al-Imam Musa al-Kazim ('a.s.), as will be explained later on. It is on this point that the Isma'iliyyah differ from the Ithna-'ashriyyah who believe in the imamate of Isma'il's brother al-Imam Musa al-Kazim and his five descendants .((peace be upon them all

We do not intend to discuss here the doctrine, the jurisprudence, the literature or the various extinct and existing sub-sects of the Isma'iliyyah. Nor are we going to discuss the differences

between their sub-sects, the sons of Isma'il who revolted in north Africa, one of the most glorious political revolutions in the Islamic history that founded the Fatimid caliphate which com- peted and in various aspects even superseded the 'Abbasids in Baghdad especially after setting anchor of caliphate in Egypt. Nay, it was quite often .even superior to that of the 'Abbasid caliphate

We do not wish to discuss here about their imams who are in hiding or living openly, or about the truth of their claim of descent from Isma'il, or whoever they mention in his family tree. All these are beyond the scope of our present discussion. What we intend to discuss here is only Isma'il himself in con- text of one question: Was Isma'il an imam designated to that position by his father, al-Imam as-Sadiq ('a.s.)? What are the positive and negative arguments surrounding this issue? We only intend to present .various views on this issue and analyze them

:Isma'ili Sources

It is necessary to point out that we face great difficulty when we refer to the Isma'iliyyah sources because the Isma'ilis are known to be very secretive, extremely ambiguous; and to work in secrecy of the extreme kind, they even resort to various disguises many times contradictory ones and they acknowledge this fact and consider .it to be one of the main characteristics of their madhhab and their imams

They were known for this in their political and religious activities long before the establishment of the Fatimid caliphate and

.also in the role they played after its fall in Egypt

This secrecy even includes their literature and intellectual legacy. Until very recently, no outsider had access to their religious literature and tradition except for small number of unreliable tracts written about them by non-Shi‘ah opponents. And what we possess of their literature does not represent even minutely the literature and sources that we hear are preserved in extreme secrecy with their imams and leaders one cannot see them or read them even if he is very closely related to them in family .ties and religious affiliation

Yet I do not know how much truth there is in this claim. We also hear that the Isma‘ilis, or at least some of them, privately disbelieve in what they openly declare or what is publicly attributed to them or what others or themselves publish about their faith. This .(is also an issue, which I can neither confirm nor deny(١

The only way open to me, and probably to other research scholars also, is to refer to whatever has been collected in our Shi‘i sources from the literature and books of the Isma‘iliyyah. It is on this that I shall base my discussion comparing what we have from .the Isma‘iliyyah with what exists in the non-Shi‘ah sources

However, the responsibility to expose what has been kept secret, to publicly declare what has been believed privately for some many centuries, to confirm what is their true belief and what is untrue, and to explain the difference

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١- [Translator's note: On the status of development of Isma‘ili studies during the modern times, see Farhad Daftari, The Isma‘ilis: Their History and Doctrine, (Cambridge, UK: Camb. Univ. Press, ١٩٩٠), pp.٢۶-٢٩.]

between az-zahir that they have declared and al-batin that they have hidden (if there .is any truth to such division) lies entirely upon the Isma‘iliyyah themselves

Yet, I apologize to the Isma‘ilis and other Muslim brethren for I do not intend – and Allah is my witness – to insult any Muslim brother, to diminish his personality and honour, or to put down their ideas and views when I present the difference in the opinions and analyze them. I surely do not intend that especially when it comes to those brethren who are closer to us theologically as well as historically, and who are one with us in our devotion to the Ahlu 'l-Bayt (‘a.s.) even though we differ in the .imamate of the later imams

:Isma‘il's Birth

Isma‘il, with whom the Shi‘ah Isma‘iliy- yah is associated is the son of the al-Imam Ja‘far as-Sadiq (‘a.s.) and was known by the agnomen al-A‘raj (the lame)(۱). His .(.mother was Fatimah daughter of al-Husayn al-Athram ibn al- Hasan ibn ‘Ali (‘a.s

This lady was also the mother of the second son of al-Imam as-Sadiq (‘a.s.), ‘Abdullah al-Aftah, with whom the Fatahiyyah sect was associated.Isma‘il was the eldest son of al-Imam as-Sadiq (‘a.s.). The Imam himself was born in ۸۳/۷۰۶; and Fatimah, Isma‘il's mother was his first wife, before whom he never married on a permanent or temporary basis, as asserted by the Isma‘iliyyah sources and we shall discuss later .on

Although history has not recorded for us

Umdatu 't-talib, p.۲۲۲; at-Tabari, Dhaylu 'l-madhil, vol.۳, p.۲۵۰۹; al- Ansab, vol.۱, fn. -۱ .p.۳۱۰; Tadhkiratu 'l-khawas, p.۳۴۷; Kashfu 'l-ghummah,vol.۲, p.۱۶۱

the time of their marriage, the most probable date – that would be in line with the personality and biography of the Imam (‘a.s.), as well as the socio-economic conditions of the time – would be when he was eighteen years old, that is, around ۱۰۰/۷۱۹.

I have not found the date of Isma‘il's birth in the biographical and genealogical works of the Imamiyyah as well as of the non-Imamiyyah. However, ‘Arif Tamir, who is an Isma‘ili himself, has mentioned that Isma‘il was born in ۱۰۱/۷۱۹–۷۲۰(۱) but he has contradicted himself in the appendix of al-Qasidatu 'sh- Shafiyah (an Isma‘ili literature that he has edited) by mentioning the birth year as ۱۱۳/۷۳۱-۷۳۲ (on p.۹۸). Moreover, Dr. Mustafa Ghalib, also an Isma‘ili, writes that Isma‘il was born in the year ۱۱۰/۷۲۸–۷۲۹(۲).

I am personally inclined to accept the first date or something closer to it, rather than the second date because of what the shaykhs: al-Kulayni and at-Tusi have narrated (and as-Saduq has also narrated something closer to it) through authentic sanad (chain) from Zurarah ibn A‘yan who said, "I saw a son of Abu ‘Abdillah [as-Sadiq, ‘a.s.], in the lifetime of Abu Ja‘far [al- Baqir, ‘a.s.], who was known as ‘Abdullah, who was already weaned and was walking but unsteadily(۳).

So I said to him, 'O child! Who is this standing besides you?' – Pointing to a young follower of the Imam – The child replied, 'He is my follower.' The follower in

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۱- Tamir, ‘A., al-Imamah fi 'l-Islam, p.۱۸۰; al-Qaramitah, p ۴۴.

۲- Ghalib, M., A‘lamu 'l-Isma‘iliyyah, p.۱۶۱; Tarikhu 'd-da‘wati 'l-Isma‘iliyyah, p.۱۳۷

۳- The words in this hadith say: "qad daraja" which means walking but unsteadily. See al-Qamus, vol.۱, p.۱۸۷; Taju 'l-‘arus, vol.۲, pp.۳۹-۴۰; Lisanu 'l-‘Arab, vol.۲, p.۲۶۶; al-Mu‘jamu 'l-wasit, vol.۱, p.۲۷۷. In the narration of as-Saduq, ‘Abdullah is described as "a small child."

a joking mood responded, 'I am not your follower.' The child said, 'This is bad for you.' Then the child was stabbed and he died." The hadith goes on to say that al- Imam al-Baqir ('a.s.), said the funeral prayer on that child in al- Baqi' graveyard and also explained the reason as to why he prayed on the child even though it was not obligatory to say the funeral prayer on a child who has not reached the age of six(١).

This hadith shows that 'Abdullah was a child between the age of three and four. We also know that al-Imam al-Baqir ('a.s.), who said this child's funeral prayer, died in the year ١١۴/٧٣٣. So this child must have been born in at least ١١٠/٧٢٨ or before it. This means that 'Abdullah al-Aftah, Isma'il's younger brother, was born after the death of the child mentioned above because al-Aftah was carrying the dead child's name. Obviously, it is very unlikely that two sons of a person would have same names while both are alive. This brings us to the conclusion that Isma'il, who is the eldest child of al-Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq ('a.s.), was born years before ١١٠/٧٢٨.

Abu Hatim ar-Razi and the author of Dasturu 'l-munajjimin, both Isma'ilis, have said: "Verily as-Sadiq ('a.s.), remained for twenty-five years without any child except Isma'il and 'Abdu- llah(٢)."al-Imam al-Kazim ('a.s.) – the eldest child after Isma'il and 'Abdullah – was born in the year ١٢٩ AH (although some less reliable sources say ١٢٨ AH).

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١ - For the hadith mentioned above, see al-Kafi, vol.٣, pp.٢٠۶-٧; Tahdhibu 'l-ahkam, vol.٣, pp.١٩٨-٩; al-Istibsar, vol.١, pp.۴٧٩-٨٠; as-Saduq, at- Tawhid, p.٣٩٣; Wasailu 'sh-Shi'ah, vol.٢, pp.٧٩٠, ٧٩٢; as-Safadi, al- Wafi bi 'l-wafayat, vol.١٣, pp.٧۵-٧۶; al-Bihar, vol.۴٧, pp.٢۶۴-۵; Jami' ahadithi 'sh-Shi'ah, vol.٣, pp.٢٧۵-۶. For ahadith on the ruling that it is not obligatory to say funeral prayer on a child under six years of age, see Wasailu 'sh-Shi'ah, vol.٢, pp.٧٨٧-٩٢; Jami' ahadithi 'sh-Shi'ah, vol.٣, pp.٢٧۵-٩.

٢ - az-Zinah, pt.٣, p.٢٨٨; Jahan-gushaye Juwayni, vol.٣, p.١۴۵ quoting from Dasturu 'l-munajjimin, foil B/٣٣٣.

light of the information provided by the Isma'ili sources, if we deduct ٢۵ years from ١٢٩, we get the year ١٠۴ AH (or ١٠٣ AH if we go by the other version of al-Imam Kazim's birth) as the birth year of Isma'il. Moreover, the Dasturu 'l-munajjimin says that Muhammad ibn Isma'il – the eldest child of Isma'il – was born in ١٣th Dhi 'l- Hijjah, ١٢١/٢٠th November, ٧٢٩. The lowest possible age of Isma'il at the birth of his son would be seventeen. So when we take out ١٧ from ١٢١, we get ١٠۴ as the birth year of Isma'il.

Isma'il's Death:

The Imamiyyah is unanimous in saying that Isma'il died during the lifetime of his father. Al-Mufid has mentioned this in al-Irshad(١) as have most of the historians and the biographers of Isma'il(٢). 'Abdu 'l-Qahir al-Baghdadi, ar- Ras'aniyy and al-Isfarayini have written about the unanimity of the historians on the issue that Isma'il predeceased his father(٣).

Isma'il died at al-'Arid, [a valley in Medina with streams and farms in it(۴), and he was carried on the shoulders of men to (the cemetery) of al-Baqi'(in Medina) where he was buried. When his corpse reached Medina, al-Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq ('a.s.) shrouded him with one of his outer garments and permitted the prominent Shi'ahs to see his face so that they may be assured of his death and not entertain any thoughts about him [as a future leader](۵).The number of such prominent Shi'ahs whom the Imam ('a.s.) used as eye-witness reached about thirty,

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١ - See Eng. transl. p.۴٣١. For details, see al-Bihar, vol. ۴٧, pp. ٢۴١-٢, ٢۴۵-۵٠, ٢۵٣-۵, and ٢۶٧-٩.

٢ - Ibn Hazm, Jamharat ansabi 'l-'Arab, p.۵٩; Ibn Khaldun, vol.۴, p.٣٠; al- Khazraji, Khulasat tahdhibi 'l-kamal, p.٣٣ who has added that "He died in childhood" and if this conclusion is erroneous, we shall prove it; Nashwan al-Himyari, al-Huru 'l-'in, p.١۶٢; and Abu 'l-Hasan al-Ash'ari, Maqalatu 'l-Islamiyyin, vol.١, p.٩٩.

٣ - al-Farq bayna 'l-firaq, p.۶٣; ar-Ras'aniyy's Mukhtasar of al-Firaq, p.۵٨; at-Tabsir fi'd-din, p.۴١

۴- Wafau 'l-wafa', vol.۴, p.۱۲۶۵; Mu'jamu 'l-buldan, vol.۴, p.۱۱۴; Taju 'l-'arus, vol.۵, p.۵۲.

۵- Ibn Abi 'l-Hadid, vol.۷, p.۴۹; al-Maqalat wa'l-firaq, pp.۷۸, ۱۰۳; Firaqu'sh-Shi'ah, p.۵۵.

.(and their names have been recorded(۱

Even when Isma‘il's litter was brought to the cemetery of al- Baqi‘, al-Imam Ja‘far as-Sadiq (‘a.s.) ordered that his litter to be put on the ground many times before he was buried, then he uncovered (Isma‘il's) face and look at it, intending to establish the fact of (Isma‘il's) death to those who had thought that he was to succeed after him, and to .(remove from them any mis- taken belief with regard to him (still) being alive(۲

As an example of what al-Imam as-Sadiq (‘a.s.) did, we may quote the authentic hadith from Sa‘id ibn ‘Abdillah al-A‘raj who said, "Abu ‘Abdillah [as-Sadiq, ‘a.s.], said, 'When Isma‘il died, I ordered that his face be uncovered, while he was on his back, then I kissed his forehead, his chin and his neck. Then I ordered that (his face) be covered. Then I said, "Uncover (his face)."Again I kissed his forehead, his chin and his .neck

Then I ordered them to cover him, and ordered that he be given the ritual bath (ghusl). Then I went to him when he had been shrouded and said, "Uncover him [i.e., his face]." Then I kissed his forehead, his chin and his neck and prayed (for him). Then I said, "Wrap him in his shroud." "'al-A‘raj says, "Then I asked [the Imam], 'by which did you invoke [Allah for] his protec- tion?' He answered, 'By the Qur'an, so that Allah " '.(may protect him by it from His own torment(۳

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۱- Ibn Shahrashub, al-Manaqib, vol.۱, pp.۲۶۶-۷; an-Nu‘mani, al-Ghaybah, pp.۳۲۷-۸; al- .Bihar, vol.۴۷, p.۲۵۴; vol.۴۸, pp.۲۱-۲۲

۲- Al-Irshad, (Eng. transl.), p.۴۳۱; at-Tabrisi, I‘lamu 'l-wara, p.۲۸۳; al-Bihar, vol.۴۷, p.۲۴۲; .Takmilatu 'r-rijal, vol.۱, p.۱۹۲

۳- Faqih man la yahduruhu 'l-faqih, vol.۱, p.۹۸; Kamalu 'd-din, vol.۱, p.۷۱; al- Bihar, vol.۴۸, pp.۲۴۷-۸; Wasailu 'sh-Shi‘ah, vol.۲, p.۹۳۴; al-Fayz al- Kashani, al-Wafi, vol.۱۳, .p.۸۷; Jami‘ ahadithi 'sh-Shi‘ah, vol.۳, p.۶

is an unanimous view that al-Imam Ja‘far as-Sadiq (‘a.s.) died in the year ۱۴۸/۷۶۵(۱) , and that he was a contemporary of the first two ‘Abbasid caliphs, Abu 'l-‘Abbas as-Saffah (b. ۱۰۴/۷۲۲, caliphate ۱۳۲/۷۴۹–۱۳۶/۷۵۴) and Abu Ja‘far al- Mansur (b. ۹۵/ ۷۱۴, caliphate ۱۳۶/۷۵۴–۱۵۸/۷۷۵). His son Isma‘il died during his father's lifetime: so, when did he die?

a)Ash-Sharif al-Husayn ibn Ja‘far ibn al-Husayn Abu 'l- Qasim ibn Khida‘ al-Husayni al-Misri (b. ۳۱۰/۹۲۲ d. after ۳۷۳/ ۹۸۳), one of the famous genealogist with expertise in the genealogy of the Egypt's sadat (descendants of the Holy Prophet of Islam) and who had lived under the Fatimid rule in their capital, says: "Verily Isma‘il died in the year ۱۳۳/۷۵۰-۷۵۱ twenty years before the death of as-Sadiq (‘a.s.)(۲)."

If this is true then Isma‘il died at the beginning of the ‘Abbasid rule during as-Saffah's reign; but his death was not twenty years before that of his father as claimed by Ibn Khida‘, rather it was five years less than that. However, Abu 'l-Hasan ‘Ali ibn Muhammad ibn ‘Ali ibn as- Sufi al-‘Umari al-‘Alawi, the famous genealogist who was alive in ۴۴۳/۱۰۵۲, quotes Ibn Khida‘ as saying that Isma‘il died in the year ۱۳۸/۷۵۵-۷۵۶(۳).This coincides with the date given by al-Maqrizi, as will be explained later. Therefore, if al-Majdi's manuscript is correct and the quotation given in it, then it will be correct to say that Isma‘il died ten years

p: ۲۴

۱- al-Bihar, vol.۴۷, pp.۱-۸; Tahdhibu 't-tahdhib, vol.۲, pp.۱۰۳-۵; Ibn Khallikan, Wafayatu 'l-a‘yan, vol.۱, p.۳۲۷; and most of the books of history recording the events of the year ۱۴۸ AH.

۲- Ibn ‘Anabah, ‘Umdatu 't-talib fi ansab Al Abi Talib, vol.۲, p.۲۳۳; al-Fusulu 'l- fakhriyyah fi 'n-nasab, p.۱۴۳; Abu Nasr al-Bukhari, Sirru 's-silsilati 'l-‘alawiyyah, p.۳۴; as-Sayyid Damin ibn Shadqam, Tuhfatu 'l-azhar as quoted in Muntaha 'l-amal, vol.۲, p.۵۰; al-Amin, A‘yanu 'sh-Shi‘ah, vol.۱۱, p.۱۹۴.

۳- Al-Majdi, MS at Malak Library in Tehran, foil ۳۱/B.

.before the death of his father

b) Abu 'l-'Abbas Ahmad ibn 'Ali al-Maqrizi al-Husayni al-'Ubaydi ash-Shafi'i (۷۶۶/۱۳۶۵–۸۴۵/۱۴۴۱), the famous historian whose genealogy goes back to the Fatimids, say: "Surely Isma'il ibn Ja'far as-Sadiq died in the lifetime of his father Ja'far in the year "(۱۳۸/۷۵۵-۷۵۶ . . .(۱

c) Nasiru 'd-Din at-Tusi Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn al- Hasan (۵۹۷/۱۲۰۱–۶۷۲/۱۲۷۴), the famous scholar and philoso- pher, in his Tarikhu l-mulahidah, 'Alau 'd-Din al-Juwayni (۶۲۳/ ۱۲۲۶–۶۸۱/۱۲۸۳) and Rashidu 'd-Din al-Hamadani (۶۴۶/ ۱۲۴۸–۷۱۸/۱۳۱۸) the famous Mongol minister – all had either accom- panied the Mongols in their attacks upon the Isma'ili forts or were ministers of Mongol rulers and had direct access to the Isma'ili literature which the invaders had looted – said, "Isma'il died five years before "(the death of his father Ja'far as-Sadiq ('a.s.), in the year ۱۴۵/۷۶۲-۷۶۳ . . .(۲

But this date (i.e., ۱۴۵ AH) precedes that of the death of as- Sadiq ('a.s.) in three years and not five. Because of this contra- diction, historians have taken one or the other side of this state- ment. For example, Cl. Huart, while writing the entry under "Isma'ilism" in the first edition of the Encyclopedia of Islam, says that Isma'il died in ۱۴۳/۷۶۰, that is, five years before the death of his father. az-Zirkili has followed him in .(al-A'lam(۳

Whereas the Soviet orientalist, Petrochevski, editors of al- Munjid, and Dahkhuda have given Isma'il's death year as ۱۴۵AH(۴). This latter date is also the view of Ivanow, the famous expert on Isma'ilism while writing

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al-Maqrizi, Itti'azu 'l-hunafa' bi akhbari 'l-aimmati 'l-Fatimiyyin al- khulafa', vol.۱, - ۱ .p.۱۵; Siyar a'lami 'n-nubala', vol.۶, p.۲۶۹

Fakhru'd-Din al-Banakati (d. ۷۳۰/۱۳۲۹-۱۳۳۰), Tarikh Banakati, p.۱۰۸ quoting from - ۲ Tarikhu 'l-mulahadah; al-Juwayni, Jahan-gushaye Juwayni, vol.۳, p.۱۴۶; al-Hamadani, .Jami'u 't-tawarikh (section on the Isma'ilis and the Fatimids) pp.۱۰, ۱۶

.Arabic transl.) vol.۲, pp.۱۸۷-۸; al-A'lam, vol.۱ (۴th ed.) pp.۳۱۱-۲) -۳

See the Persian translation of Petrochevski's Islam dar Iran, pp.۲۶۸, ۲۹۶;Al-Munjid, -۴
.names section, p.۳۲; Dahkhuda, Lughat-namah, ("Isma'iliyyah") entry ۱۹/۲۵۶۴

in the Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam (p.۱۷۹), he says: "Isma'il died a short time before the death of Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq."

The year ۱۴۵ AH has also been mentioned in the surviving literature of the Isma'ilis. For example, the famous critic, Muhammad Qazwini says that this date [۱۴۵ AH] is also stated in Dasturu 'l-munajjimin.(۱) The same view is expressed by Arif Tamir, an Isma'ili; even though he has contradicted himself in the appendix of al-Qaramitah (p.۴۴) by writing Isma'il's dates of birth and death as ۱۰۱ and ۱۵۹ AH respectively.(۲)

Isma'ilis have another view also. They say that the year ۱۴۵ AH was the beginning of the occultation of Isma'il, and that he died in the year ۱۵۸/۷۷۵(۳). Based on these two last views, Isma'il died during the reign of Abu Ja'far al-Mansur.

Besides the unanimity found in the Isma'ili sources, there is evidence in our hadith and historical sources, which suggest that Isma'il lived till the reign of al-Mansur. See what Rizam ibn Muslim has narrated that Isma'il was with his father al- Imam as-Sadiq ('a.s.) in Hirah, Iraq, during the caliphate of al- Mansur;(۴) and somewhat similar narration by Abu Khadijah from a man from Kindah who was an executioner for al-Mansur;(۵) and what Bakr ibn Abi Bakr al-Hadrami has narrated about the misfortune that has afflicted his father during the time of Isma'il's illness and eventual death.(۶)

Based on these evidences, we cannot accept the first

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۱ - FN Note: Dasturu 'l-munajjimin, foil ۳۳۴/A; Jahan-gushaye Juwayni, vol.۳, p.۳۰۹ Muhammad Qazwini says that although this book is supposed to be an astronomical record but it also contains important historical informations especially in relation to Isma'ilism. It seems that the writer of Dastur was a Nizari Isma'ili, and that the book was written around ۵۰۰ AH/۱۱۰۷ CE and its original manuscript is preserved in the National Library of Paris (no. Arabe ۵۹۶۸), which seems to have been handwritten by the author himself. See Jahan-gushaye Juwayni, vol.۳, pp.۳۵۶-۷, ۵۸۰ fn.

۲ - See Tamir, 'A., al-Imamah, p.۱۸۰; al-Qaramitah, p.۴۷; and the supplement to al-Qasidatu 'sh-Shafiyah, p.۹۸.

۳- Ghalib, M., A‘lam, pp.۱۶۴-۵; Tarikh, pp.۱۴۲-۳.

۴ - Dalailu 'l-imamah, p.۱۱۹; Mahju’d-da‘awat, pp.۲۱۲-۳; Kashfu 'l-ghum- mah, vol.۲, p.۱۹۱; al-Bihar, vol.۴۷, p.۲۰۴.

۵- Al-Kharaij WA 'l-jaraih, p.۲۳۳; al-Bihar, vol.۴۷, pp.۱۰۲-۳

۶- Kashfu 'l-ghummah, vol.۲, p.۱۹۳; al-Bihar, vol.۴۷, p.۱۴۵.

date of Isma‘il's death (١٣٣ AH) as given by Ibn Khida‘even though many scholars have relied on him. We are, therefore, left with the second (١٣٨ AH) and the third (١۴۵ AH) dates which place Isma‘il's death during al-Mansur's reign. Abu Ja‘far at-Tabari has .provided for us evidence, which gives credence to the third date

He narrates from ‘Umar ibn Shabbah from his narrators that Muhammad and Ibrahim, sons of ‘Abdullah ibn al-Hasan, got together with their followers in Mecca during the time of their concealment, and devised a plan to assassinate the Caliph al-Mansur in the hajj of the year ١۴۴/٧۶٢. (Obviously, the hajj is performed during the last month of the lunar Arabic calendar.) One of the military leaders of al-Mansur entered their gathering ". . . then Isma‘il ibn Ja‘far ibn Muhammad al-A‘raj protested to Abu Ja‘far [al-Mansur] who informed him of their plan. He then sent for the leader [of the conspirators] but did not succeed in arresting him; instead a group of his companions ".(were arrested while the leader disappeared . . (١

All this ambiguity about Isma‘il's year of death brings us to a problem for which I have yet to see a proper explanation covering all its angles. Isma‘il did not live a short life, probably forty years or more (١٠۴/٧٢٣–١۴۵/٧۶٢); and a major part of his life coincided with significant events during which a revolution removed the Umayyids from power .and sat the ‘Abbasids onto the seat of caliphate

The caliphate, during

(.At-Tabari, at-Tarikh, vol.٣, p.١۵۴. (Europe ed -١

its early days, wit- nessed quite a few political movements many of which ended in bloody revolts led by sectarian groups seeking political ends or by political groups using sectarian guise. The most significant of these revolts were led by the Hasanids (the cousins of Isma'il descending from al-Imam al-Hasan ibn 'Ali, 'a.s.) from the days of the Umayyids and reached its peak in the year ۱۴۵/۷۶۲ against al-Mansur in Medina the city where Isma'il lived and Basrah. Why did not Isma'il have any significant role in these events? This phenomenon has led Khayru'd-Din az-Zirkili to make the following comment on Isma'il: "There is nothing in our available historical sources to suggest that he was of any significance during his lifetime(۱)."

Could the reason for this be that Isma'il was associated to an extremely secret underground movement and had failed in lead- ing it to a political success? Or was it that when his underground political movement failed (like that of Abu 'l-Khattab and his companions in Kufah, as we shall discuss below), Isma'il adopted an entirely negative and reclusive attitude towards political activism, parties and events?

There is another problematic phenomenon related to the death of Isma'il itself: When al-Mansur came to power, he changed the 'Abbasid government's policy towards the 'Alids from what it was during his predecessor, as-Saffah. The latter was lenient and tolerant towards the 'Alids, while the former was bent upon keeping them under surveillance, closely monitoring their activities and movements, appointing spies over them and penetrating

۱- az-Zirkili, al-A'lam, vol.۱, p.۳۱۱

.their ranks with informers

Al-Mansur even ordered his governors to follow the same policy towards the ‘Alids, and if he found them to be incapable of following his policy or sensed lukewarm response towards it, he would not hesitate to replace them with others who were willing to follow his whims and desires. In the Hasanid revolt, especially in the events preceding it, we see sufficient evidence to prove the change in the policy of the .‘Abbasids towards the ‘Alids

The stance of al-Mansur towards the al-Imam as-Sadiq is a sufficient evidence to prove what we have said(۱). Soon after assuming the caliphate, al-Mansur targeted the Imam: "He ordered that the Imam be brought from Medina to Basrah, addressed him rudely, mistreated him and even accused him of organizing a revolt against the ".(‘Abbasid government(۲

History and its custodians followed the official policy of al- Mansur in the sense that historians started to give importance to the ‘Alids by recording their activities and events related to them unlike the days of as-Saffah when historians chose to ignore them. Therefore, if the death of Isma‘il occurred during the reign of al-Mansur, then the historians would have recorded it, especially so when we see the extraordinary steps taken by al- Imam Ja‘far as-Sadiq to publicize his death (by showing the face to the people and also recording it in writing with the governor of Medina). This would have been more likely also because of the year in which he died ۱۴۵/۷۶۲, the year of the

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See al-Bihar, vol.۴۷ (section on "What happened between him and al-Mansur.") - ۱ pp.۱۶۲-۲۱۲

Ihqaqu 'l-haqq, vol.۱۲, p.۲۵۴ quoting from al-Ayatu 'l-bayyinat, pp.۱۵۹f;‘Aynu 'l-adab - ۲ wa 's-siyasah, pp.۱۸۲f

.famous revolt of the Hasanids against al-Mansur

So, how can it be correct to accept that an event like the death of Isma'il – with all its extraordinary circumstances related to his death – takes place in the city of revolt (Medina) and the year of revolt (۱۴۵ AH) but stays unnoticed and unreported by the officials, the spies and the informers, and consequently be overlooked by the ?historians also

Isma'il's "Imamate": Isma'il's name is connected with a famous sect of the Shi'ahs that relates itself to him and calls itself as "Isma'iliyyah", and claims imamate for him. It is obvious that the position of imamate which they ascribe to Isma'il cannot be the actual imamate as long as his father, the actual Imam, was alive because the imamate could not be transferred from his father to himself except if the father dies .or is removed from the position of imamate

But Allah does not bestow imamate, being a divine position, to someone who will cease to deserve it at a later time. Neither can two persons, in view of those who see imamate as a divine position, claim to hold actual imamate at the same time. In light of the above, the only plausible explanation for the Isma'iliyyah belief vis-à-vis Isma'il and imamate is that Isma'il had been appointed as the imam-designate to succeed the previous imam; however, as long as the previous imam was alive, he could be considered as an imam-designate only. Or, in terminology of usulu 'l-fiqh, we

may express their view by saying that Isma‘il was designated (ja‘l) as an imam but the actualization (fi‘liyyah) of that appointment would happen only after his father's .death

So, when the Isma‘ilis claim imamate for Isma‘il in the life time of his father, they cannot claim the actual imamate for him unless they believe that al-Imam Ja‘far as-Sadiq (‘a.s.) was removed from the position of imamate since that is the only case in which the imamate could transfer from the father to the son while the former was still .living

The Isma‘ilis accept the imamate of al-Imam Ja‘far as-Sadiq (‘a.s.) for as long as he was alive; but they were compelled to believe in a form of imamate for Isma‘il so that they may consider him as the legitimate link through whom the imamate transferred to his children with the exclusion of his brother al-Imam al-Kazim and his descendants (‘a.s.). This was a necessary link to authenticate the imamate of Isma‘ili imams including the Fatimid caliphs who ruled North- West Africa and then Egypt from ۲۹۷/۹۱۰ .to ۵۶۷/۱۱۷۱

The Khattabiyyah

:The Khattabiyyah and Isma‘il's Imamate

The scholars of religions say that the Khattabiyyah sect believed in Isma‘il as an actual imam during the lifetime of his father, as-Sadiq (‘a.s.). The Khattabiyyah are followers of Abu 'l-Khattab ibn Abi Zaynab, Muhammad ibn Miqlas al-Ajda‘ al-Asadi al-.(Kufi (d.۱۳۷/۷۵۵

In the beginning, Abu 'l-Khattab was follower of the true madhhab and sound in his ideas; he associated himself with al-Imam as-Sadiq (‘a.s.) and narrated ahadith from him. But

then he started exaggeration and went beyond the proper limits he started to say erroneous things about the Imams, in particu- lar about al-Imam as-Sadiq (‘a.s.); he .even invented laws and falsely attributed them to the Imam in his narrations

A group of people started following his views. Al-Imam as-Sadiq, however, disassociated himself from Abu 'l-Khattab, rejected his sayings, and cursed him and his followers. Many narrations have come to us from him and the later Imams cursing Abu 'l-Khattab and condemning him and his views. The followers of Abu 'l-Khattab have been accused of exaggerating even about Abu 'l-Khattab himself to the extent of claiming prophethood, and even higher status, for him. They also believed in .transmigration of souls and incarnation

Abu 'l-Khattab and his followers used to display piety, asceticism and devotional acts by staying constantly at the main mosque of Kufah, engaged in prayers and worship. They continued their show of piety, in words of the biographers, until someone reported to ‘Isa ibn Musa ibn Muhammad ibn ‘Ali ibn ‘Abdillah ibn al-‘Abbas (۱۰۲/۷۲۱–۱۶۷/۷۸۳), the nephew of al-Mansur, the ‘Abbasid Caliph and his governor in Kufah (۱۳۲/۷۵–۱۴۷/۷۶۴), that the Khattabiyyah are openly indulging in licentiousness and .calling people to believe in the prophethood of Abu 'l-Khattab

He sent an army to arrest them, but they refused to surrender and fought the army in the mosque itself. The fighting was intense although the only weapon they possessed was sticks and canes, until all seventy of them were killed, and Abu'l-Khattab

himself was arrested and later killed in the worst manner. This happened around ۱۳۷/۷۵۵(۱).

The Khattabiyyah are considered, to some extent, a continu- ation of al-Mughayriyyah, the group that was associated to al- Mughirah ibn Sa'id al-'Ijli al-Kufi (d. ۱۱۹/۷۳۷), which was formed a few years before in Kufah. It started as a religious group, and then turned into a political revolt during the last days of the Umayyad reign, but it was crushed together with its leader. Both these groups have many similar characteristics, including the exaggeration regarding the status of the Imams ('a.s.). It was this similarity (and also the fact that they were almost contemporary) that has led many to confuse one for the other(۲).

The Khattabiyyah used to believe in the imamate of Isma'il during his lifetime(۳). Probably it is somewhat exaggerated when it is said that the idea of Isma'il's imamate itself originates from the Khattabiyyah and that they are the ones who invented it and adopted it(۴).

Abu Hatim ar-Razi, the Isma'ili missionary (ad-da'i), says: "al-Khattabiyyah: associated to Abu 'l-Khattab . . . believed in the imamate of Isma'il ibn Ja'far in the lifetime of his father Ja'far. But when Isma'il died, they returned to the belief in the imamate of Ja'far.(۵)" Sa'd ibn 'Abdillah al-Ash'ari and an- Nawbakhti have mentioned a sect which "assumed that the Imam after Ja'far is his son Isma'il ibn Ja'far, and it rejected Isma'il's death during his father's lifetime; and said

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۱- al-Maqalat wa 'l-firaq, pp.۵۴-۵۵, ۶۳-۶۴, ۸۱-۸۶; Firaqu 'sh-Shi'ah, pp.۳۷-۴۱, ۵۸-۶۴; ash- Shahristani, al-Milal wa 'n-nihal, vol.۱. Pp.۱۷۹-۸۱; Maqalatu 'l-Islamiyyin, vol.۱. pp.۷۵-۷۸; az-Zinah, pt.۳, p.۲۸۹; al-Kishshi, in various places, especially pp.۲۹۰-۳۰۷, ۳۲۴, ۳۵۲-۳; Majma'u 'r-rijal, vol.۳, p.۹۴; vol.۵, pp.۱۰۶-۱۵; Mu'jam rijali 'l-hadith, vol.۸, pp.۲۵-۲۶; vol.۱۴, pp.۲۵۸-۷۶ and many other sources.

۲- See our commentary on the English translation of Usul al-Kafi, ("The Book of Divine Proof"), vol.۱, pt.۲ fasc.iv, pp.۲۹۹-۳۰۰

٣- al-Kishshi, pp.٣٢١, ٣٢٣-۴; Majma'u 'r-rijal, vol.۶, p.١٢٣; Tanqihu 'l- maqal, vol.١, pt.٣, p.٢۴١; Ma'jam rijali 'l-hadith, vol.١٨, p.٣۴١.

۴- Ibnu 'n-Nadim, p.٢٣٨; Ibnu 'l-Athir, vol.٨, pp.٢٨-٣٠; Itti'azu 'l-hunafa', vol.١, pp.٣٨-٣٩ quoting Ibnu 'l-Athir.

۵- Az-Zinah, pt.٣, p.٢٨٩. On p.٣٠۶, he says: "Verily one of the Extremist groups is al-Khattabiyyah which believed in the imamate of Isma'il and Muhammad ibn Isma'il."

that [the death] was an attempt on the part of his father to confuse the people ... because he feared for his life, therefore, he concealed him from them

This sect is the true Isma'iliyyah sect(1). After mentioning other sects, they say: "The true Isma'iliyyah is the Khattabiyyah, the followers of Abu 'l-Khattab, Muhammad ibn Abi Zaynab al-Asadi al-Ajda'(may Allah curse him); and a group from them has entered in the sect of Muhammad ibn Isma'il and accepted the death of Isma'il during his father's lifetime(2)."

Probably the reason which caused Abu 'l-Khattab and his followers to adopt the view of Isma'il's imamate, was to call the people towards him, and to show or pretend that they were associated with him and even carried his name. Naturally, they linked all these together in order to claim that their views are actually his, and that they only execute his order – while his father, as-Sadiq ('a.s.) was still alive and known as an Imam whose words were followed by his Shi'ahs.

The Khattabiyyah did not exist but during the time and days of the imamate of as-Sadiq ('a.s.). They, previously, prompted the Mughayriyyahs to affiliate themselves to Muhammad ibn 'Abdillah al-Hasani – as we shall point out later – even though this sect began in the time of al-Imam al-Baqir ('a.s.)(3); it grew during the time of as-Sadiq ('a.s.), and its revolt took place during his imamate.

The reason, and probably the main reason, was the stand taken by the

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١- al-Maqalat wa 'l-firaq, p.٨٠; Firaqu 'sh-Shi'ah, pp.۵٧-۵٨.

٢- Ibid., p.٨١; ibid., pp.۵٨-۵٩.

٣- Ibn Abi 'l-Hadid, vol.٨, p١٢١; al-'Uyun wa 'l-hadaiq, vol.٣, pp.٢٣٠-١

two Imams, al-Baqir and as-Sadiq (‘a.s.), vis-à-vis these two sects and their followers, which forced them to form their affiliations with others. I do not know whether their affiliation to Isma‘il was with his knowledge and consent or not? Nor do we know what his stand in the beginning was when these groups started as sectarian movements .and at the end when they turned into revolutionary movements

I do not intend to discuss here the life of Isma‘il or to analyze him religiously and ethically, specially so after what our Shaykhu 'l-Mufid (r.a.) – the scholar of the Imamiyyah, its teacher and one of its intellectual leaders has said Isma‘il in Kitab al-(.Irshad. (See p.۴۳۱ of the Eng. transl

In view of the here biographers, the Khattabiyyah considered itself as the Isma‘iliyyah. After the execution of Abu 'l-Khattab, and the deaths of Isma‘il and then his father al-Imam as-Sadiq (‘a.s.), the majority of the Khattabiyyah were either inclined to the imamate of Muhammad ibn Isma‘il or became divided into two groups: those who remained on the imamate of Isma‘il, and those who joined his son Muhammad and accepted his imamate. This is the point of disagreement between the .(heresiographers(۱

It seems necessary to raise a point which would enlighten some ambiguous aspects of the Mughayriyyah's history; and that is the fact that although the Mughayriyyah existed during the time of the two Imams, al-Baqir and as-Sadiq (‘a.s.), it

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۱ - az-Zinah, pt.۳, pp.۲۸۹, ۳۰۶; al-Maqalat wa 'l-firaq, pp.۸۰-۸۱, ۸۳; Firaqu'sh-Shi‘ah, .pp.۵۷-۵۸, ۶۰; al-Huru 'l-‘in, p.۱۶۸

associated itself – and we do not wish to scrutinize the validity of their claim of affiliation to Muhammad ibn ‘Abdillah ibn al- Hasan al-Hasani who led the revolt against the ‘Abbasids. The Mughayriyyah claimed that this Muhammad was the Awaited al-Mahdi who will go into occultation and then re-appear after the occultation to lead the revolution, which has been promised to us in the religious texts. They continued in this belief even after Muhammad rose in revolt and was killed(١).

Why did the Mughayriyyah affiliate itself to the descendants of al-Hasan ibn ‘Ali, in particular, and not to any of the sons of Imams al-Baqir and as-Sadiq (‘a.s.)? What caused them, at a later stage, to associate with Isma‘il and not with his uncles from the descendants of al-Hasan even though the latter continued their political revolt against the ‘Abbasids? What were the motivating factors, something contradictory, in the minds of the leaders of this sect? These questions re-enforce what I have said earlier about the ambiguity surrounding Isma‘il; and, perhaps, finding the right answers would lead us to under- stand the unknown aspects of his life and personality.

It is important to note that the famous Isma‘ili writer, al-Qadi Abu Hanifah an-Nu‘man ibn Muhammad, and the Isma‘ili missionary, Idris, both have reported statements of al-Imam as- Sadiq (‘a.s.) against Abu 'l-Khattab himself, his views, and fol- lowers similar to what the Imamiyyah scholars have narrated(٢).

This is, however, contrary to what the Isma‘ili missionary, Abu Hatim ar-Razi, believes in as we

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١ - ash-Shahristani, al-Milal, vol.١, pp.١٧۶, ١٧٧; al-Fisal, vol.۴, pp.١٨۴-۵; Maqalatu 'l-Islamiyyin, vol.١, pp.٧٣, ٩۶; al-Wafi bi 'l-wafayat, vol.٣, p.٢٩٩; al-Farq bayna 'l-firaq, pp.٢٢٩, ٢٣١-٣; at-Tabsir fi 'd-Din, p.١٠٩; Ibn Abi 'l-Hadid, vol.٨, p.١٢١; al-Maqalat wa 'l-firaq, pp.۴٣, ٧۴, ٧٧; Firaqu 'sh-Shi‘ah, pp. ۵٣ ۵۵.

٢ - al-Qadi an-Nu‘man, Da‘aimu 'l-Islam, vol.١, pp.۴٩-۵٠; Idris, ‘Uyunu 'l- akhbar, vol.۴, pp.٢٨٧-٨

have quoted in above. Muhammad Qazwini, quotes the famous Isma‘ili document, Dasturu 'l-munajjimin, (foil ٣٣٣/B), about al-Imam as-Sadiq's companions as follows: "Among his famous companions, other than Abu 'l-Khattab, are al-Mufaddal ibn ‘Umar, Jabir ibn Hayyan as-Sufi (author of many books), and ‘Abdullah ibn Maymun from him was secured [sic; probably it is 'with whom'] the seventh of the children of [blank; probably it is 'Ja‘far'] who was known as al-Qaim Muhammad ibn Isma‘il(١)."

Even more amusing is what ‘Arif Tamir the Isma‘ili says about the Khattabiy- yah: "al-Khattabiyyah is a sect of the Ja‘fariyyah which follows Abu 'l-Khattab, a student of Ja‘far, who was known as Muhammad ibn Zaynab [sic] al-Asadi al-Ajda‘. This sect proclaims the imamate of Ja‘far ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq following the style of the Extremists and the Batinis. And after the death of Ja‘far, they moved to the Musawiyyah group which proclaimed the imamate of Musa al-Kazim ibn Ja‘far (?); and finally it affiliated with the Isma‘iliyyah(٢)."

Before concluding this section, I would like to quote what the Isma‘ili scholar, Dr. Mustafa Ghalib, has said on this topic: We ought to mention what the famous British orientalist, Bernard Lewis, has written on this subject, [giving reference to the footnote of The Origins of Isma‘ilism, pp.٢٨, (?)٩٩ ١٠٤, ١٠٦].

Bernard Lewis assures that "the revolutionary movements of the second quarter of the second hijri century [١٥١/٧٦٨–٢٠٠/٨١٥, during which period neither Abu 'l-Khattab nor as-Sadiq (‘a.s.), or Isma‘il were alive! Perhaps, he meant the first

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١- Juwayni, Jahan-gushaye Juwayni, vol.٣, p.٢٢٣ (in fn. and sup-).

٢- Tamir, ‘A., al-Imamah, p.٨٦.

quarter, i.e., ۱۰۱/۷۱۹–۱۵۰/۷۶۷] brought about the existence of the Isma'iliyyah, and that the first person to organize the group was Abu 'l-Khattab in collaboration with Isma'il ibn al-Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq. When Isma'il and Abu 'l-Khattab died, their followers turned to Muhammad ibn Isma'il."

After discussing the difference over the death of Imam Isma'il and the division which occurred among the Shi'ahs, he says: "It is most likely that Ja'far as-Sadiq had deposed his son Isma'il just because he was in contact with Abu 'l-Khattab and had rebelled against the authority of his father al-Imam as- Sadiq." Lewis concludes the discussion by saying, "The Isma'ili sect was founded by the children of Abu 'l-Khattab."

We are truly amazed that a famous orientalist like Bernard Lewis would state such erroneous views concerning us that betray his lack of indepth in the study of Isma'ilism. We declare that all the manuscripts that exist in our possession reject any connection between the Isma'iliyyah and the Khattabiyyah, and that most of the Sunni and Shi'ah sources acknowledge that no such connection existed. Moreover, the Isma'ilis them- selves consider the Khattabiyyah sect as one of the renegade extremist sects.(۱) ...

We have already described the difficulty we face on the sources of the Isma'iliyyah and the tradition of secrecy that they have carried on till now. Therefore, until they publish their hidden literature – which contains only some, not all, of their heritage and until they acknowledge that it is authentic in the eyes of all their sub-sects and

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۱ - Ghalib, M., Tarikh, pp.۱۴۰-۱. [The brackets include my own additional comments. (Author)]

that it truly reflects their views and beliefs, and until they satisfy others that it is being published with integrity, in complete form without any deletion or interpolation – I stand alone, without ascribing anything to others, in doubt about the defense of this .brother [Dr. M. Ghalib] of ours regarding his sect

I say this especially after having found that our brother, Dr. Ghalib, in his A‘ l amu 'l-Isma‘iliyyah (p.۱۶۲) and Tarikhu 'd- da‘wati 'l-Isma‘iliyyah (p.۱۳۸) attributes a statement to al-Maqrizi in his Itti‘azu 'l-hunafa’ a book published and circulated widely which does not exist in that book at all(۱)! Again on the same pages of his two books, Dr. Ghalib attributes to Ibn Khaldun in his al-‘Ibar, a statement which does not exist at .(all(۲

On the same pages in both of his works, he has quoted a statement from ash-Shahristani which is greatly different from what has been written by the latter in al-Milal wa 'n-nihal (vol.۱, p.۱۹۱) and in the notes to al-Fasl (vol.۲, pp.۲۷-۲۸), and from what has been quoted from him in al-Wafi bi 'l-wafayat (vol.۹, pp.۱۰۱-۲). Dr. Ghalib has also attributed in his A‘lam (p.۱۶۴) a statement to Ibn ‘Anabah in his ‘Umdatu’t-talib(۳) !which does not exist in it at all

After having found all this discrepancy in a few pages of Ghalib's two books, I have all the right to maintain the doubt and skepticism whenever he urges us to believe in the truth of his statements. The simplest

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.See Itti‘azu 'l-hunafa’, vol.۱, pp.۵-۵۵ -۱

See al-‘Ibar, vol.۳, pp. ۳۶۰ff – as quoted by Dr. Ghalib himself – and also see vol.۴ -۲ pp.۲۸ff, and al-Muqaddimah, vol.۱, p.۱۶۸ where Ibn Khaldun has discussed the Isma‘iliyyah and the Fatimids

See ‘Umdatu’t-talib, pp.۲۲۲-۳ of the edition on Dr. Ghalib himself has quoted; and -۳ .see also p.۲۲۳ of the second edition

of all question for which I have not yet found a convincing answer is the following: If Isma'il had not collaborated with Abu 'l-Khattab and his followers, and did not agree with the latter's views, then why nothing has been nar- rated from him, or at least from his immediate followers, on this issue which would demonstrate, even remotely, ?Isma'il's rejection and displeasure

This, in spite of all that has been talked about Abu 'l-Khattab and his views! The Isma'iliyyah themselves have narrations from al-Imam as-Sadiq ('a.s.) on this issue, but no- thing from his son Isma'il has been narrated even though he is an imam to !(them like his father(١

Isma'ilism – whether as a revolutionary movement founded by the Khattabiyyah (by themselves or in collaboration with an- other group) or as a sect – was contemporary of Isma'il himself. It was founded – as mentioned above – on the belief that: the imamate was transferred from al-Imam as-Sadiq ('a.s.) to Isma'il, and from him to his sons. But when they were faced with the problem of Isma'il's death in the lifetime of his father, they tried to reconcile this accident (which almost shattered their peculiar doctrine) with theological foundations. The historians of religion state that at the :death of Isma'il, the Isma'iliyyah were divided into two groups

FIRST: A group said that Isma'il had not died; instead, they believed that he had gone into hiding, that his father had hidden him, and that he deliberately confused the people, staged his

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Translator's note: After affirming the evidence that confirms the existence of close] -١ relations between Isma'il and the radical circles of as-Sadiq ('a.s.)'s followers, Dr. Farhad Daftari writes: "In modern times, too, this identification has been maintained by certain scholars, notably Massignon and Corbin. Massignon has, in fact, suggested that Abu 'l- Khattab was the spiritual or adoptive father of Isma'il, whence his kunyah [.of Abu Isma'il." See, The Isma'ilis, p.۹۹

death as part of dissimulation (taqiyyah) and even prepared a written testimony that was attested by witnesses including al-Mansur's governor in Medina.

Some historians of religion have stated that this group totally rejected the death of Isma'il, it believed that he neither died during his father's lifetime nor after his death; and that he will never die until he appears and rules the whole world. This group is known as the Pure Isma'iliyyah (al-Isma'iliyyah al-Khalisah)(١).

While other historians state that this group believed in the death of Isma'il but only after the death of his father(٢).The Isma'iliy- yah sources agree with this latter view as we have already mentioned above under and as we shall elaborate on it later.

SECOND: The second group is known as al-Mubarakiyyah, after a person known as al-Mubarak. This group believes that Isma'il actually died in the lifetime of his father but this happened after his father had designated him as the Imam.

They also believe that such designations cannot be revoked retroactively, and that imamate cannot be transferred to anyone but the children of the designated Imam. The benefit of such designation is that the imamate would continue exclusively among the children of the nominated person; and Isma'il, at the time of his death, nom- inated his son Muhammad who, thereafter, became the Imam(٣).

The historians say that the founder of this group, al-Mubarak, was a slave/client of Isma'il ibn Ja'far himself(۴). What has come to us (the non-Isma'ilis) from the Isma'iliy- yah sources and I would like

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١ - al-Maqalat wa 'l-firaq, p.٨٠; Firaqu 'sh-Shi'ah, pp.۵٧-۵٨; al-Fusulu 'l-mukhtarah, vol.٢, pp.٢۴٧-٨; Maqalatu 'l-Islamiyyin, vol.١, p.٩٨; al-Huru'l-'in, p.١۶٢; al-Farq bayna 'l-firaq (ed. Muhyi 'd-Din) p.۶٣; Qawa'id'aqaid al Muhammad, p.٢٣.

٢ - ash-Shahristani, al-Milal, vol.١, pp.١۶٧, ١٩١-٢; al-Wafi bi 'l-wafayat, vol.٩, pp.١٠١-٢ (quoting ash-Shahristani))

٣ - al-Fusulu 'l-mukhtarah, vol.٢, p.٢۴٨; al-Maqalat wa 'l-firaq, pp.٨٠-٨١; Firaqu 'sh-

Shi'ah, p.٥٨; Maqalatu 'l-Islamiyyin, vol.١, pp.٩٨-٩٩; ash- Shahristani, vol.١, pp.١۶٨, ١٩١; al-Farq bayna 'l-firaq, pp.۶٣-۶۴; al-Huru 'l-'in, pp. ١۶٢-٣; at-Tabsir fi 'd-din, p.۴٢; al-Maqrizi, al-Khitat, vol.٢, p.٣٥١; Qawa'id 'aqaid al Muhammad, p.٢٣; al-Wafi bi 'l-wafayat, vol.٩, p.١٠٢

۴ - Abu Hatim ar-Razi, az-Zinah, pt.٣, p.٢٨٩; al-Fusulu 'l-mukhtarah, vol.٢, p.٢۴٨; al-Maqalat wa 'l-firaq, p.٨١; Firaqu 'sh-Shi'ah, p.٥٨.

the reader to keep in mind the difficulties we have with such sources as mentioned in above shows that all the Isma'ilis are unanimous on one issue: all the signs of death were apparent on Isma'il, and whoever saw him was convinced of his death and would testify with absolute certainty to that matter; and that all the funeral rites were performed for him including placing him in the grave and burying him.

They also agree in the extraordinary steps taken by al-Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq ('a.s.) to demonstrate the death of Isma'il such as assembling witnesses who wrote a testimony about Isma'il's death; one of those who signed was Caliph Mansur's governor in Medina; and that this testimony was sent to the Caliph himself.

And that al-Imam as-Sadiq ('a.s.) publicly announced his death; and that when the body of al-Imam Isma'il – as the Isma'ilis like to call him was being carried to al-Baqi' cemetery, his father ordered that it be put onto the ground and then he uncovered Isma'il's face so that the people could see him; and that he was asking the people, "Is this not my son Isma'il?" and they were saying, "Yes." This he did more than once. Then he observed the mourning ritual for several days during which people would visit him to pay their condolences and testify to the fact that his son Isma'il had died.

Although the Isma'ili sources agree on what we have mentioned above, but they differ among themselves in reconciling the above facts

with their belief: while some say that Isma‘il had actually died, others say that he went into concealment. (We shall elaborate later on the portrayal of the last group of the event, and their concept of the occultation.)

From among the persons I have surveyed in history, the following authorities believe in the death of Isma‘il during his father's lifetime:

i. The famous Isma‘ili missionary (ad-da‘i), Ahmad ibn Hamdan ibn Ahmad, Abu Hatim ar-Razi al-Warsani al- Laythi (d. ۳۲۲/۹۳۴)(۱).

ii. an-Nu‘man ibn Muhammad ibn Mansur, al-Qadi, Abu Hanifah, Ibn Hayyun al-Misri (۲۷۰/۸۸۴–۳۶۳/۹۷۴). The most famous Isma‘ili writer and author of the well-known work Da‘aimu 'l-Islam(۲).

iii. Ja‘far ibn Mansur al-Yamani, one of the distinguished Isma‘ili missionaries at the dawn of the Fatimids rule in North Africa. He is mentioned in the manuscript of Asraru 'n-nutaqa’, as quoted by Mustafa Ghalib, the Isma‘ili, in Tarikhu 'd-da‘wati 'l-Isma‘iliyyah, p.۱۴۰; and Dr. Hasan Ibrahim Hasan in Tarikhu 'd-dawlati 'l-Fatimiyyah, pp. ۴۸۶-۷ (۳).

iv. Ahmad ibn ‘Abdillah, Hamidu 'd-Din al-Kirmani (b. ۳۵۲/۹۶۳; d. after ۴۱۲/۱۰۲۱), he is described by his companions as "Hujjatu 'l-‘Iraqayn" and "missionary of the missionaries"(۴).

V. Muhammad Qazwini, the author of Dasturu 'l-munajjimin, already mentioned in above.

vi. ad-Da‘i Idris ibn al-Hasan ibn ‘Abdillah, ‘Imadu 'd-Din, al- Qurashi al-Yamani (۸۳۲/۱۴۲۸? –۸۷۲/۱۴۶۷(۵)).

vii. ad-Da‘i al-Hasan ibn Nuh al-Isma‘ili al-Bahruchi al-Hindi (d. ۹۳۹/۱۵۳۲-۱۵۳۳)(۶).

viii. ash-Shaykh ‘Abdullah ibn al-Murtada(۷).

ix. Asaf A.A. Fyzee. His statement will

۱- az-Zinah, pt.۳, pp.۲۸۷-۹.

۲- Sharhu 'l-akhbar, as quoted by ad-Da‘i Idris in his ‘Uyunu 'l-akhbar, ۷th quarto, p.۳۳۴; al-Majdu‘, al-Fihrist, p.۷۲, (who quoted this from vol.۱۴ of Sharhu 'l-akhbar); Asasu 't-ta’wil, p.۵۱; see al-Majdu‘, al-Fihrist, p.۲۴۱.

۳- Ghalib, M., A‘lam, pp.۱۸۵-۶

۴- al-Masabih fi ithbati 'l-imamah, pp.۱۲۹ff

۵- Zahru 'l-ma‘ani, MS, pp.۴۷-۴۹, ۵۱; A‘lamu, pp.۴۴۷, ۵۵۹; Tarikhu 'd- da‘wati 'l-Isma‘iliyyah, p.۱۴۰; Itti‘azu 'l-hunafa’, vol.۱, p.۲۴, in the footnote of Ivanow; Diyau 'l-basair wa zubdati 's-sarair, MS, as quoted by al-Majdu‘ in al-Fihrist, p.۲۴۱, and in the published edition of ‘Uyunu 'l-akhbar, which will appear later on.

۶- al-Azhar wa majma‘u 'l-anwar, as quoted in Tarikhu 'd-da‘wati 'l-Isma‘iliy- yah of Ghalib, M., pp.۱۵۱-۲.

۷- al-Falaku 'd-dawwar fi samai 'l-aimmati 'l-athar, as quoted in Tarikhu 'd- da‘wati 'l-Isma‘iliyyah, pp.۱۳۹-۴۰. Muhammad Hasan al-A‘zami says in al-Haqaiqu 'l-khafiyyah ‘ani 'sh-Shi‘ati 'l-Fatimiyyah wa 'l-Ithna-‘ashariyyah, chapter on "Some Fatimid Authors and Their Works" pp.۱۸۹-۹۰, that among the works of ash-Shaykh ‘Abdullah ibn al-Murtada is al-Falaku 'd- dawwar fi samai 'l-aimmati 'l-athar, printed in Aleppo in ۱۹۳۳.

.come below

Now, as an example of this group's view, we shall quote, here below, two accounts of their statements; and we restrict our comments only on the necessary aspects (which cannot be left unsaid); and overlook many others which are, presently, not at our :capability to cite views thereby

First: The absolute da'i – as he is described by the Isma'ili biographers – 'Imadu 'd-Din, Idris ibn al-Hasan ibn 'Abdillah al-Qurashi al-Yamani, in his book 'Uyunu 'l-akhbar wa fununu 'l-athar (the seventh quarto)(۱) has a section on Isma'il which is entitled as: "About the story of al-Imam Isma'il ibn Ja'far ibn Muhammad, the blessing of Allah be upon them; and his death during the lifetime of his father; and the issue of imamate to his son Muhammad ibn Isma'il, peace be upon them; and of the Shi'ahs who inclined towards him of the descendants of al-Imam as-Sadiq, peace be upon him and "... his sons; and their division after the concealment of the Imam

Then he says: "Abu 'Abdillah as-Sadiq, Ja'far ibn Muham- mad, had five children: Isma'il, 'Abdullah; their mother was Fatimah daughter of al-Hasan ibn al-Hasan ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (۲)... And Ja'far ibn Muhammad ('a.s.), did not marry [anyone else] nor ...(took any slave-girl for himself until Fatimah bint al-Hasan died(۳

The most exalted in position and the most beloved of all to him was his son Isma'il" ('a.s.); he used to keep him closer to himself with the

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.Edited by Dr. Mustafa Ghalib and published by Daru 't-Turathi 'l-Fatimi, Beirut, ۱۹۷۳ -۱

This is how Dr. Mustafa Ghalib has also mentioned the name of Isma'il's mother in -۲ A'lamu 'l-Isma'iliyyah, p.۱۶۱, and in Tarikhu 'd-da'wati 'l-Isma'iliyyah, p.۱۳۷. The correct name, however, is Fatimah daughter of al-Husayn al-Athram ibn al-Hasan. (See Ibn Hazm, Jamharat ansabi 'l-'Arab, p.۵۹; Abu Nasr al-Bukhari, Sirru 's-silsilati 'l-'Alawiyyah, p.۳۴; Ibn 'Anabah, 'Umdatu 't- talib, p.۲۲۲; ash-Shahristani, vol.۱, p.۱۶۷; al-Maqalat wa 'l-firaq, p.۸۰; Firaqu 'sh-Shi'ah, p.۵۸; az-Zinah, pt.۳, p.۲۸۷.) Besides the two brothers mentioned in the text, the following authors add that they had a half-

sister from their mother named Lady Bintu 'l-Husayn whom they nicknamed Umm Farwah. (See Mus'ab az-Zubayri, Nasab Quraysh, p.۶۳; at-Tabari, Dhaylu 'l-mudhayyal, vol.۳, p.۲۵۰۹; Sibt ibn al-Jawzi, Tadhkirat khawassi 'l-ummah, p.۳۴۷ quoting from Ibn Sa'd in at-Tabaqat; Khashfu 'l-ghummah, vol.۲, p.۱۶۱.)

۳- This is one of the arguments of the Isma'iliyyah that al-Imam as-Sadiq ('a.s.), did not marry anyone nor did he take any slave-girl for himself while Isma'il's mother was alive just as the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), did out of respect for Khadijah, and just as 'Ali ('a.s.) did out of respect for Fatimah ('a.s.). (See ash-Shahristani, vol.۱, p.۱۹۱; al-Wafi bi 'l-wafayat, vol.۹, p.۱۰۱; az-Zinah, pt.۳, p.۲۸۸.) There is, however, an authentic narration from Hisham ibn Salim to the effect that al-Imam as-Sadiq ('a.s.) had taken a slave-girl for himself while Isma'il's mother was alive; and that the latter, out of jealousy, behaved in a manner not befitting her status and that she did not treat the Imam well, and that he used to fear her jealousy because of taking the slave-girl for himself. (See Tahdhibu 'l-ahkam, vol.۱, p.۱۳۴; al-Istibsar, vol.۱, pp.۱۲۴-۵; al-Bihar, vol.۴۷, pp.۲۶۶-۷; Wasailu 'sh-Shi'ah, vol.۱, pp.۵۰۷-۸; al-Wafi, vol.۴, p.۷۹; Jami'ahadithi 'sh-Shi'ah, vol.۲, p.۴۰۳). If what they claim is true that al-Imam as-Sadiq did not marry anyone while Fatimah was alive, then it was not out of respect for her but because he feared her jealousy. Moreover, we have mentioned earlier under that al-Imam as-Sadiq ('a.s.) had a son, 'Abdullah, who died in childhood and that Isma'il was not much older than him, and he was not from Isma'il's mother otherwise the genealogists and historians would have mentioned it.

exclusion of others and used to show more respect compared to others just as Ya'qub (Jacob) prefer Yusuf over his other sons(۱). Then al-Imam Ja'far ibn Muhammad ('a.s.) designated al-Imam Isma'il ibn Ja'far as the Imam and introduced him to the .(prominent Shi'ahs as the Imam who will take his place(۲

Al-Qadi an-Nu'man ibn Muhammad, may Allah be pleased with him, [the famous" Isma'ili scholar to whose view regarding Isma'il's death we had previously referred], has narrated the following from al-Imam al-Mu'izz li-Dinillah ('a.s.), [his full name is Ma'add ibn Isma'il (al-Mansur) ibn Muhammad (al-Qaim) ibn 'Abdillah (al-Mahdi – the founder of the Fatimid dynasty), the Fatimid caliph (b. ۳۱۹/۹۳۱), caliphate ۳۴۱/۹۵۳– [۳۶۵/۹۷۵

The circumstances of Abu 'Abdillah Ja'far ibn Muhammad ('a.s.) were restricted and constrained to a great extent – these circumstances came about during his time and engulfed his era. I [i.e., al-Qadi Nu'man ibn Muhammad] said, 'this must have put the Shi'ahs in great difficulty after his death to the extent that they differed with one another about his successor! He [i.e., al-Mu'izz] ('a.s.) said, 'Therein lies the good for-(tune of the true people and misfortune of the evil ones.' (ibid.p.۳۳۳

I said, 'O my master! If he [as-Sadiq, 'a.s.] had clarified the matter of successor ship just as it was clarified by his father [al-Baqir, 'a.s.] about himself, and had dispelled the doubts from his followers, appointed and clearly designated a leader to succeed him '?wouldn't this have eliminated the doubts and differences

He said, 'Far from truth! That

This is also one of the exaggerations found in the Isma'ili literature. What exists in -۱ the Shi'ah Imamiyyah literature is same as what ash-Shaykhu 'l- Mufid (may Allah be pleased with him) has mentioned about Isma'il in al- Irshad, (p.۴۳۱ of Eng. transl.). In my opinion, this exaggeration reflects the attitude of the early Isma'ilis and their secretive methods; they are the ones who created this myth and spread it as far and wide as possible. I do not want to discuss this and other similar attitudes – and they

are many in regard to the personality of Isma‘il himself – and would prefer not to .make any comments on which our eminent scholars have remained silent

This is also one of the claims of the Isma‘iliyyah. We shall mention the proofs that -٢ al-Imam as-Sadiq (‘a.s.) never ever appointed Isma‘il or gave any indication towards that possibility. ash-Shaykhu 'l-Mufid has dealt with this issue and has also proven that the Imam gave clear indication about the imamate of Musa al-Kazim (‘a.s.) while .Isma‘il was alive

was not the time for such a clear designation of a successor. Of course, he had done so privately for those whom he trusted. As for declaring it openly and publicizing it, that neither was impossible at that time nor was there any opportunity for him to do '. . .so during his era because of fear of the enemies

Al-Imam Ja‘far ibn Muhammad [as-Sadiq] (‘a.s.) bought a slave-girl named Umm" Farwah(١), and gifted her to his son Isma‘il (‘a.s.). She bore two sons for him namely, Muhammad ibn Isma‘il and ‘Ali ibn Isma‘il. It is, however, said that the mother of ‘Ali (ibn Isma‘il was a lady from Makhzumiyyah tribe(٢) . . . (ibid. p.٣٧۴

When Abu Ja‘far [al-Mansur] al-‘Abbasi came to know that as-Sadiq (‘a.s.), has" appointed Isma‘il as his successor . . . he feared that Isma‘il will turn away the public against him. So he sent a message to as-Sadiq (‘a.s.) inquiring whether Isma‘il was residing with him . . . but al-Imam as-Sadiq (‘a.s.) did not respond to him by sending his son Isma‘il to al-Mansur . . . rather he (as-Sadiq, ‘a.s.) started treating al-Mansur politely out of his fear for his son's life . . . thus, he concealed his son Isma‘il who, consequently, stayed hidden in his house for a whole year and four months(٣) till his .(‘a.s.)'s death

When al-Imam Isma‘il (may Allah's grace, pleasure, mercy and blissing be upon"

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١ - al-Qadi an-Nu‘man does not give any reference for this claim. It seems quite implausible that the slave-girl also had the same name as that of al- Imam as-Sadiq .(‘a.s.)'s own mother and his own daughter, the sister of Isma‘il, as mentioned earlier

٢ - The genealogists support the second view. For example, Mus‘ab az-Zubayri says in his Nasab Quraysh (p.۶٣), "The following were born to Isma‘il ibn Ja‘far: Muhammad from a slave-girl; and ‘Ali and Fatimah from Umm Ibrahim bint Hisham ibn Isma‘il ibn Hisham ibn al-Walid ibn al-Mughirah al-Makhzumiyyah." (Sirru 's-silsilati 'l-‘Alawiyyah, p.٣۵; Jamharat ansabu 'l-‘Arab, p.۶٠; al-Majdi, foil ٣١/B; Itti‘azu 'l-hunafa’, vol.١, p.١۵.) The Shi‘ah Imamiyyah ahadith mention that Isma‘il also had another woman, daughter of Zulfi, whose company he did not like that much. But the ahadith do not

mention whether she was a wife or a slave- girl, although refering to her by her father's name gives credence to the view that she was a free woman and a wife of Isma'il. (See al-Bihar, vol.۴۷, p.۲۶۸ quoting from MS Kitabu 't-Tamhis).

۳- All these claims of the Isma'ilis are baseless. If we were to comment and review on each of these claims one by one, then the result would be completely different from what the Isma'ilis say

him(۱)) died during the lifetime of his father, the latter disclosed his fate and announced his death. And the body of al-Imam Isma'il ibn Ja'far was carried to al-Baqi cemetery; his father, as-Sadiq ('a.s.), went along with it to al-Baqi' and ordered that the bier be put on the ground, then he would uncover Isma'il's face, look at it, and would ask those who were present: 'Is this not my son Isma'il?' And they would say, 'Yes.' This he did many times(۲)."

The famous missionary, Idris ibn al-Hasan, continues his narration and repeats second and third times (on pp.۳۴۹, ۳۵۰) that Isma'il died during the lifetime of his father. He had emphasized this point even when he was writing about his father, as-Sadiq ('a.s.). (vol.۴, p.۳۳۱)

Second: Asaf A.A. Fyzee, in his article "The Isma'ilis", says: ". . . Isma'ilism took its name from the eldest of the sons of Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq. It appears that Isma'il was appointed the heir-apparent by the sixth Imam Ja'far, but later incurred the displeasure of his father. The causes are not known; but it is suggested that he was addicted to drink(۳). . . As Isma'il died before his father, his son Muhammad, the seventh Imam according to the Isma'ili computation, was given a special status(۴)."

The second group of the Isma'ilis, i.e., al-Mubarakiyyah, agree with the first in all that has been said above except that it claims Isma'il died on the command of his father – the Imam – and was raised back

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۱- Later on it will dawn upon you what the Isma'ilis has attributed to Isma'il,and then you will know the value of these salutations and praises!

۲- Other Isma'ili authors have added that al-Imam as-Sadiq ('a.s.) assembled witnesses who wrote a testimony confirming the death of Isma'il; and one of the witnesses was al-Mansur's governor in Medina; and then this testimony was sent to the caliph himself. See Dr. Mustafa Ghalib, A'lamu 'l-Isma'iliyyah, p.۱۶۴. He also says: "The majority of the historians, who have documented the Isma'ili call, mentioned this." (Tarikhu 'd-da'wati 'l- Isma'iliyyah, pp.۱۳۹, ۱۴۲; 'Arif Tamir, al-Qaramitah, p.۴۶; al-

Imamah fi'l-Islam, p.۱۸۰.) al-Imam as-Sadiq ('a.s.) held sittings for grieving his son in which people came to him and testified to the death of his son Isma'il. This is known from the authentic reports of his [as-Sadiq's] students. ad- Da'i Ahmad ibn Ya'qub, Abu 'l-Fawaris al-Haqqani (b. ۳۶۰/۹۷۱ d. approx. ۴۱۳/۱۰۲۲) in Risalatu 'l-Imamah as quoted by Dr. Mustafa Ghalib in al-Imamah wa Qaimu 'l-qiyamah, pp.۲۶۵-۶. In the Risalatu 'l-Imamah of Abu 'l-Fawaris al-Haqqani (pub. in Arba'Kutub Isma'iliyyah, p.۱۶), it says: "[Isma'il's face] remained uncovered for three days while our Master [as-Sadiq, 'a.s.], asked all those who visited him to witness [Isma'il's corpse] and then he ordered it to be buried on the fourth day. al-Qadi an- Nu'man ibn Muhammad, may Allah be pleased with him, said in his Sharhu 'l-akhbar that 'there was a reason for delaying the burial; and then al-Imam Isma'il was buried in al-Baqi' and his grave is well known.'" Historial sources that testify that Isma'il was buried in Medina (al-Baqi') are Wafau 'l-wafa' bi akhbar dari 'l-Mustafa, vol.۳, pp.۹۲۰۱; Khulasatu 'l-wafa', pp.۴۳۲-۳; Tuhfatu 'l-'alim, vol.۲, p.۱۴, al-Bihar, vol.۴۸, pp.۲۹۵-۶; Maraqidu 'l-ma'arif, vol.۱, .pp.۱۵۵-۷. During the hajj season, Isma'ilis are seen visiting his grave in Medina

This is accepted as a historical fact by the Isma'ilis themselves, or at least by some -۳ of their sub-sects, as can be seen by what al-Juwayni and al- Hamadani have narrated about their defence for Isma'il that after he became an Imam by the designation of his father, he was above reproach for his actions; and that drinking intoxicants does not diminish his status or disqualify him from imamate! (See Jahan-gushaye Juwayni, vol.۳, pp.۱۴۵-۶; Jami'u 't-tawarikh [section on Isma'ili and Fatimids] !pp.۹; and we do not comment by edding anything more

Fyzee, Asaf A.A., "The Isma'ilis" in Religion in the Middle East, by A.J.Arberry, - ۴ .(Cambridge University Press, ۱۹۶۹), vol.۲, ch.۱۷, pp.۳۱۸-۹

to life and went into occultation by a sort of miracle. The following is a list of the :names of scholars of this group and their views

In “ar-Risalatu 'l-Ula" of Arba‘Kutub Isma‘iliyyah, it says: "Question no.۱۲ (?), about (۱ our Master Isma‘il ibn Ja‘far (may Allah's blessings be upon him), the display of his death, and his return back to life in Basrah." Then the writer answers the question by saying that al-Imam as-Sadiq (‘a.s.) ordered Isma‘il to pretend death, and so he died (and for three days his father asked those who visited him to witness the death of his son, and then ordered that he be buried on the fourth day). Then he came back to life; .(this was kind of a miracle(۱

Ahmad ibn Ya‘qub, Abu 'l-Fawaris al-Haqqani at-Tarabu- lusi al-Misri (b. ۳۶۰/۹۷۱ d. (۲ approx. ۴۱۳/۱۰۲۲), the Isma‘ili mis- sionary, discusses the imamate of Isma‘il and his son, Muhammad, in his book al-Imamah. He then also talks about those who reject their imamate on account of Isma‘il's death because "there are famous and well-known reports about Isma‘il's death during his father's lifetime." He continues to say that this rejection is based on "clear proof that reliable people saw the face of Isma‘il ".[disappearing under the earth [i.e., in his grave

Then the missionary proceeds to discredit this view by saying that "the Imam (‘a.s.), has the right to conceal his proof and his ability from his enemy and from those whose might he fears because

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Arba‘ Kutub Isma‘iliyyah, edited by Shetruman (The Scientific Academy, n.d., - ۱ Guetington, Germany), pp. ۱۵-۱۶. On page ۱۲۰, the same question has been repeated and has been answered in a similar but concise form. Also see al-Majdu‘, al-Fihrist, .p.۲۲۵

he is most knowledgeable of all about the good of the issue. And I say that the fact that as-Sadiq, Ja'far ibn Muhammad ('a.s.), displayed the death of his son Isma'il during his own lifetime in order to conceal him. If it had not been so then he would not have openly sat in mourning for his son for those who came to pay condolences to him so that they could testify to the death of his son Isma'il. This is known by the "(correct reports narrated from his students.(۱

The 'most distinguished' missionary – as the Isma'ilis like to call him – Muhammad (۳ ibn 'Ali ibn Hasan as-Suri (۴۱۷/۱۰۲۶–۴۹۰/۱۰۹۷), after refuting the Imamiyyah's belief about the Awaited al-Mahdi, denying its authenticity, ridiculing his Occultation and .questioning the advantage of concealment, says in al- Qasidatu 's-Suriyah

.It is proven by deduction and evidence that in Isma'il's house is the guidance

And he, not the brothers, is the inheritor

,of the status of as-Sadiq as his successor. Then ascended in his exalted position

.Muhammad the Seventh, holder of fortune

His call spread wide and opened up

From the hidden wisdom it shone up. The Banu 'Abbasid Sultan of the age

was a man very strong and a savage. The fear of 'Abbasid Sultan's animosity

.caused Isma'il to disappear prematurely

.Just as Muhammad after him had to hide, while the Sultan searched and spied

,But Allah took him under His protection

,then He guarded him in His station. After him many Imams went into hiding

for

Ghalib, M., al-Imamah wa qaimu 'l-qiyamah, (Beirut: Dar Maktabati 'l-Hilal, ١٩٨١) - ١
pp.٢۶۵-۶

.(tyranny and darkness was spreading(١

As for the modern Isma'ili writers, we shall quote only what has been written in Arabic, for I have no access to any- thing in other languages except the writings of .Asaf A.A. Fyzee which have already quoted earlier

a) 'Arif Tamir, while writing about Isma'il, says: "His father, as-Sadiq, claimed that he died in the year ١٣٨ AH(٢) according to the testimony in which he asked the 'Abbasid Caliph al- Mansur's governor to be a witness. This action was just a cover to conceal Isma'il . . . This caused him to leave [Medina] for Basrah so that he may live there in hiding for the rest of his life. He died in Basrah in ١۴۵ AH(٣) While his brother, Musa ibn "...Ja'far al-Kazim worked as a cover for him

There are many statements by the historians, which confirm that he died during the lifetime of his father; and that the story of his appearance in Basrah is just a baseless story. Whatever may be the case, the Isma'ilis became known for secrecy, con- cealment and protection concerning their Imams(۴). In the light of this, it is not .(implausible to think of the first narration as correct(۵

b) Dr. Mustafa Ghalib, after discussing a little about Isma'il and his death, says: "Yet most Isma'ili historians say that the story of the death of Isma'il ibn Ja'far during the lifetime of his father was a story by which ibn [sic] Ja'far as-Sadiq intended to mislead and

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al-Qasidatu 's-Suriyah, edited by 'Arif Tamir (Damascus: The French Institute, ١٩۵۵) -١ p.۶٧

When did as-Sadiq ('a.s.) make such a claim? Where has it been recorded? Who has -٢ narrated this claim? Yes. The year ١٣٨ is the date of Isma'il's death as given by al- !Maqrizi as mentioned earlier

Even in ١۴۵ A.H., Isma'il's father, as-Sadiq ('a.s.), was still alive as mentioned in. al- -٣ Imam as-Sadiq ('a.s.) died in ١۴٨/٧۶۵, and this date is accepted by the Isma'ili writers also, including 'Arif Tamir. (See'Uyunu 'l-akhbar, vol.۴, p.٣٣١; A'lamu 'l-Isma'iliyyah,

p.۱۸۴; Tarikhu 'd-da‘wati 'l-Isma‘iliyyah, p.۱۳۵; al-Imamah fi 'l-Islam, p.۱۱۸; al-
!Qaramitah, p.۴۴.) The mind of this poor writer is, indeed, confused on this issue

To the extent of declaring them dead and coming up with display of funeral rituals – -۴
as the modern writers say – in the most elaborate manner, and then bringing them
!back to life

Tamir, ‘A., al-Imamah fi 'l-Islam (Beirut: Daru 'l-Katibi 'l-‘Arabi, n.d.)pp.۱۸۰-۱. Also - ۵
see al-Qaramitah: on their Origins, Development, History and Wars, (Beirut: Dar
.Maktabati 'l-Hayat, n.d.) pp.۴۶-۴۷

misinform the ‘Abbasid Caliph Abu Ja‘far al- Mansur who pursued the Shi‘ah Imams. Ja‘far as-Sadiq feared for his son and successor, Isma‘il, so he claimed his death, assembled the witnesses who testified to his death in writing, and then sent that testimony to the ‘Abbasid Caliph who expressed joy and delight at the death of Isma‘il .to whom was assigned the imamate of the Shi‘ah

Then Isma‘il has been seen at that time in Basrah and other cities of Iran . . ." Then Dr. Ghalib insists on this point again: "After having surveyed all that has been written about the imamate of Isma‘il, our view is that al-Imam Ja‘far as-Sadiq sensed the danger that threatened the life of his son . . . therefore, he ordered him to go into hiding; and this happened in the year ۱۴۵ AH and he went into hiding. Then he was sighted in the year ۱۵۱ AH in Basrah when he passed by a crippled person whom he cured by the permission of Allah. Isma‘il lived for many years . . . until he died in ۱۵۷ .(AH"(۱

Ahadith of as-Sadiq (‘a.s.) denying Isma‘il's Imamate: Now, I would like to quote the ahadith, which clearly prove that al-Imam Ja‘far as-Sadiq (‘a.s.) did not ever appoint Isma‘il as an imam. I shall present these ahadith in brief without quoting their isnad :((chain of narrators

i) an-Nu‘mani narrates

Ghalib, M., A‘lamu 'l-Isma‘iliyyah, (Beirut, Dar Yaqzati 'l-‘Arabiyyah, ۱۹۶۴), pp.۱۶۴, - ۱ .۱۶۵; also see and compare pp.۴۴۷-۸

through his sources from al-Walid ibn Sabih who said: "There occurred between me and a person named as ‘Abdu 'l-Jalil a discussion [apparently on imamate and imam] in which he said, 'Surely Abu ‘Abdillah [as-Sadiq] (‘a.s.), has appointed Isma‘il as his successor.' I mentioned this [conversation] to Abu ‘Abdillah (‘a.s.) and he said, 'O Walid, no by Allah! For, if I have done so, then it is for so-and-so' – referring to Abu 'l-Hasan Musa (‘a.s.) – and then he (‘a.s.) named him.(۱)"

ii) al-Kishshi narrates through his sources from Isma‘il ibn‘Amir who said: "I visited Abu ‘Abdillah [as-Sadiq] (‘a.s.), and described for him the Imams until I reached to his name, and then I said, ‘And Isma‘il is [the Imam] after you.' He said, 'As for him, no.'" Hammad [ibn ‘Uthman who has narrated this hadith from Isma‘il] said, "I asked Isma‘il, 'What prompted you to say that Isma‘il after you?' He replied, 'al-Mufaddal ibn ‘Umar has asked me [to say that](۲).'

iii) an-Nu‘mani narrates through his sources from Ishaq ibn‘Ammar as-Sayrafi who said: "My brother, Isma‘il ibn ‘Ammar, described his faith and belief to Abu ‘Abdillah [as-Sadiq] (‘a.s.), and said, 'I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah and that you' – and then he described them, the Imams, one after the other until he reached Abu ‘Abdillah (‘a.s.) –and then said, 'And Isma‘il after

p: ۵۲

۱- an-Nu‘mani, al-Ghaybah, p.۳۲۶; al-Bihar, vol.۴۸, p.۲۲.

۲- al-Kishshi, pp.۳۲۵-۶, ۵۹۰; Majma‘u 'r-rijal, vol.۶, p.۱۲۷; Tanqihu 'l- maqal, vol.۱, pt.۳, p.۲۴۱; Mu‘jam rijali 'l-hadith, vol.۱۸, p.۳۴۳.

(you.' The Imam said, 'As for Isma‘il, no.'"(1

iv) There is a lengthy hadith narrated by both an-Nu‘mani and al-Kishshi from al-Fayd ibn al-Mukhtar in which al-Imam Ja‘far as-Sadiq (‘a.s.) has denied that imamate was for Isma‘il and confirmed it for al-Kazim (‘a.s.), while the latter was still young and the former was present in the gathering but then left [on hearing his father's .(statement](2

v) as-Saffar and al-Mufid have narrated with correct isnad from Masma‘ ibn ‘Abdi 'l-Malik who [said that he] visited Abu‘Abdillah [as-Sadiq] (‘a.s.), while Isma‘il was present there. He (Masma‘) believed that Isma‘il would be the next imam after his father. There he [Masma‘] heard as-Sadiq (‘a.s.) clearly ap- pointing al-Kazim [as the next imam]. Others, also, heard this with him; and then he (‘a.s.) denied Isma‘il to be .(an imam(3

vi as-Saffar and al-Kulayni have narrated from Abu Basir who said: "I was with Abu ‘Abdillah [as-Sadiq] (‘a.s.), while [people were] describing the successors [of the Prophet, i.e., imams] and I mentioned Isma‘il. The Imam said, 'No, by Allah, O Abu Muhammad! This is not up to us, or anyone else except Allah, to whom belong Might (and Majesty; He reveals one [name] after another.'"(4

Ahadith of as-Sadiq (‘a.s.) on designation of al-Kazim (‘a.s.) to Imamate: There are correct ahadith, which prove that as-Sadiq (‘a.s.) has clearly appointed his son al-Kazim (‘a.s.) during the lifetime of Isma‘il. Some of such ahadith have already been mentioned in (see the fourth and

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al -Ghaybah, p.۳۲۴; al-Bihar, vol.۴۷, p.۲۶۱ -۱

.al-Ghaybah, pp.۳۲۴-۶; al-Kishshi, pp.۳۵۴-۶, ۶۶۲; al-Bihar, vol.۴۷, pp.۲۵۹-۶۱ -۲

.Basairu’d-darajat, pp.۳۳۹-۴۰; al-Ikhtisas, p.۲۹۰; al-Bihar, vol.۴۸, pp.۲۴-۲۵ -۳

Basairu’d-darajat, p.۴۷۱; al-Kafi (Kitabu 'l-Hujjah), vol.۱, pp.۲۷۷, ۹۳۶; al-Wafi, vol.۲, -۴ p.۶۰; al-Bihar, vol.۲۳, p.۷۱

:fifth narration), and here we add the following

i) The hadith by al-Fayd ibn al-Mukhtar as narrated by as-Saffar in Basairu 'd-Darajat, p.۳۳۶; al-Kulayni in al-Kafi, vol.۱, pp.۳۰۷, ۷۹۸; al-Majlisi in al-Bihar, vol.۴۸, pp.۱۴-۱۵; and .al-Mufid in al-Irshad (English translation) p.۴۳۷-۸

ii) The correct hadith of Mansur ibn Hazim which says that al- Imam as-Sadiq ('a.s.), appointed his son al-Kazim ('a.s.), while the latter was around five years of age. This would mean the year ۱۳۴/۷۵۱ since al-Imam al-Kazim was born on ۷th of Safar ۱۲۹/۲۸th .of October ۷۴۶. See al-Kafi, vol.۱, p.۳۰۹ and al- Irshad (English translation) p.۴۳۸

iii) The hadith narrated by as-Saduq from Ibrahim al-Karkhi who said that he visited al-Imam as-Sadiq ('a.s.) and saw al-Kazim ('a.s.) entering the room while he was still a young boy. The Imam stood up and kissed him, and clearly declared that he is the next Imam after him. The hadith continues until Ibrahim says: "Then entered a person from the sympathizers of Banu Umayyah and the speech broke off."(۱)This shows .that this event took place before ۱۳۲/۷۵۰ which was the beginning of the Abbasid era

Beside these, there are other ahadith mentioned by al- Mufid in al-Irshad under the chapter "The Designation (nass) of (al-Imam Musa) for the Imamate by his Father, peace be on them" in which as-Sadiq ('a.s.) has designated Musa al-Kazim ('a.s.) as an .imam while he was still a child

,The Concept of al-Bada' and Isma'il: As for the concept of al-bada' and Isma'il

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۱- Kamalu 'd-din wa tamami 'n-ni'mah, vol.۲, pp.۳۳۴-۵; al-Bihar, vol.۴۸, pp.۱۵-۱۶.

I do not want to discuss here about al- bada’ and its meaning or the various views on it and the correct one. Here I just intend to touch upon the issue of al-bada’ in relation to Isma‘il.What is found in the Isma‘ili literature about al-bada’ has, toa greater .extent, no significant religious value for us

Our ash- Shaykhu 's-Saduq (r.a.), has pointed it out when he discusses al- bada’ in at-Tawhid (p.۳۳۶) and says: "As for the saying of al- Imam as-Sadiq, peace be upon him, in which he said, 'Allah has not manifested any matter like what manifested from His [decision] concerning my son Isma‘il.'(۱) The Imam meant that nothing manifested itself from the will of Allah concerning any affair, as it manifested concerning my son Isma‘il when He took him away before me, so that it may be known that he was not .the Imam after me

However, this hadith has been narrated to me through Abu 'l-Husayn al-Asadi (may Allah be pleased with him) and it contains a strange thing: He narrates that al-Imam as-Sadiq (‘a.s.) said, 'No bada’ o ccurred for Allah the way it occurred for Him in case of my [fore-]father Isma‘il when He ordered his father Ibrahim to sacrifice him but then replaced it with a greater sacrifice [Qur’an, ۳۷:۱۰۱-۷].'" As for both versions of this .’hadith, I have my own view, yet I have quoted them to show the meaning of al-bada

Ash-Shaykhu 's-Saduq says that the hadith has come in

My son Isma‘il" is the version of hadith as quoted by Zayd an-Narsi in al-Usulu 's- -۱ sittah-‘ashar, p.۴۹, al-Bihar, vol.۴, p.۱۲۲; vol.۴۷, p.۲۶۹. Zayd an-Narsi is not known as a reliable narrator and there is a lot of contro- versy about his book. See Mu‘jam rijali 'l-.hadith, vol.۷, pp.۳۶۷-۸, ۳۷۱-۲

different styles with a variety of meanings; that each word carries a different meaning from the other, and that neither versions of the hadith is correct. This is how al-Majlisi has understood as- Saduq's conclusion in al-Bihar, vol.۴, p.۱۰۹(۱).The opinion of as-Saduq (r.a.), regarding the hadith of al-bada' in relation to Isma'il may be :summarized as follows

a) The hadith of al-bada' is not authentic, therefore it would be incorrect to rely upon .it as a religious proof

b) The hadith has been narrated in conflicting forms: One version talks about al-bada' in case of Isma'il ibn Ja'far, while the other version talks about al-bada' in case of the .(.Prophet Isma'il ibn Ibrahim ('a.s.), the fore-father of as-Sadiq ('a.s

c) The word used for Isma'il son of as-Sadiq ('a.s.) is not the meaning of al-bada' commonly used; its correct interpretation is attributable to Allah, the Praised. The meaning of al-bada' in this hadith merely means that Allah, the Praised, manifested the error of the people (in their judgment) and their ignorance con- cerning destiny and death, and what Allah, the Praised, had decreed. There were some who thought that the next imam after as-Sadiq ('a.s.) would be his son Isma'il. They erroneously relied on appearance of things not facts like Isma'il being the eldest son of his father, and that he would live after his father and become the next imam, etc. as mentioned .by al-Mufid (r.a.), in al-Irshad

But when Allah caused him to die before his father, the erroneousness of

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۱- See as-Saduq, I'tiqadatu 'l-Imamiyyah, p.۷۳; [or Eng. transl. A Shi'ite Creed, trans. .[by Asaf A.A. Fyzee, pub. by WOFIS, Tehran, p.۴۲

their conjectures became manifest to such people, they realized that they did not have the knowledge of the future and what has been hidden from them except when Allah Himself manifests it to them. By Isma'il's premature death, Allah manifested to them that He had not chosen him as an imam; otherwise, He would not have caused .him to die before his father

d) Ash-Shaykhu 'l-Mufid (r.a.), has another interpretation concerning this hadith in which he has relied upon another hadith of al-Imam as-Sadiq ('a.s.). We shall discuss .it later

The "Ghaybah" of Isma'il: Even if we overlook all that has been quoted above from the Isma'ili sources about Isma'il's death and the date of his death, the usage of the term "ghaybah" for Isma'il does not convey the meaning we know for this term. al-Ghaybah means that a person lives the life, granted to him by Allah, in concealment and hiding from the people, and which entails severing contact from the public .generally, if it is a minor occultation, and completely, if it is a major occultation

We have already mentioned that the available Isma'ili sources are unanimous on the view that Isma'il definitely died like any other human beings and that complete funeral rites which are normally observed for dead persons were also observed for him. There are, however, a few among the Isma'ilis who claim that Isma'il came back to life after having died. This life after

death in this world is reflected by the term ar-raj‘ah and not by the term al-ghaybah. :This minority group claims that

a) Isma‘il did not survive his father; that he died but rose back to life. In other words, this group believes in raj‘ah of Isma‘il; no matter whether they like this term for their !belief or not

.b) His coming back to life was a kind of miracle of the highest form

.c) Isma‘il lived for many years after coming back to life

.d) After coming back to life, Isma‘il lived in hiding, away from the eyes of the people

All these four claims must be substantiated

- :However, the proofs offered for their claims are

The proofs

a) They say that Isma‘il lived, after his father's death, for five years (i.e., ١۴٨ AH + ۵ yrs. = ١۵٣ AH/٧٧٠ CE). So, if we add these five years to those he lived as contemporary to his father, since the death play was performed for him, he would have them lived for several years after he came back to life. They try to prove their claim by quoting the story of the crippled person who begged a man (for charity). (The man), instead of giving him money, cured him miraculously; and that man was Isma‘il(١). Dr. Mustafa Ghalib narrates this story by saying, "And it is said that al-Imam Isma‘il was seen in Basrah where he passed by a crippled person who begged for help and he

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١- al-Juwayni, Jahan-gushaye Juwayni, vol.٣, p.١۴٨; al-Hamadani, Jami‘u 't- tawarikh (section on the "Isma‘ilis"), p.١٠. Both add that a blind beggar asked for him and Isma‘il .cured his blindness

cured him by the permission of Allah."(١) But a few pages later, he repeats the same story as a historical fact and says that it happened in the year ١٥١/٧۶٨.I do not know (from where he got this date!(٢

Both ash-Shahristani and as-Safadi have narrated this story as the Isma'ilis' evidence for the raj'ah of Isma'il but in a slightly different form. They write that the reason, which prompted as- Sadiq ('a.s.) to call for witnesses at the death of Isma'il, lies in "the report, which was forwarded to al-Mansur that Isma'il ibn Ja'far was seen in Basrah where he passed by a crippled person and cured him by the permission of Allah. al-Mansur sent a message to as-Sadiq saying that Isma'il ibn Ja'far is alive and has been seen in Basrah. At that time, as-Sadiq sent the written testimony [of Isma'il's (death] to al-Mansur which included the testimony of his governor in Medina."(٣

Dr. Mustafa Ghalib narrates this in his Tarikhu 'd-da'wati 'l- Isma'iliyyah (p.١٣٩) and does not reject it. In light of this quota- tion, the story, even if it is true, does not prove !(.that Isma'il lived after his father as-Sadiq ('a.s

It is truly amazing to see that Mustafa Ghalib quotes from Dasturu 'l-munajjimin – which we have already quoted in which it mentions Isma'il's death in the year ١۴۵/٧۶٢ – as follows: "The book Dasturu 'l-munajjimin confirms that Isma'il was the first Imam to go into hiding, and the beginning of his

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.Ghalib, M., Tarikh, p.١٣٩ -١

.Ibid, p.١۴٣; A'lam, p.١۶۵ -٢

.ash-Shahristani, al-Milal wa 'n-nihal, vol.١, p.١٩١; al-Wafi bi 'l-wafayat, vol.٩, p.١٠٢ -٣

occultation was in the year ۱۴۵ AH; and that he died only seven years after that [۱۴۵ AH (+ ۷yrs. = ۱۵۲ AH/۷۶۹ CE]."(۱)

By keeping in mind what we have mentioned about reliability of Dr. Ghalib's quotations and how he falsely attributes statements to published works of non-Isma'ili writers, we can excuse him if he interpolates while quoting from an Isma'ili manuscript which is inaccessible to most, thinking that it is the property of the Isma'iliyyah who can use it any way they like without others having a right to prevent them from it!

Even more amusing is the categorical statement of Dr. Ghalib where he says that Isma'il died in ۱۵۸/۷۷۵ while he also quotes the statement from Dasturu 'l-munajjimin (which gives the death year as ۱۵۲ AH) and proves the ghaybah of their imam!(۲)

b) One more proof this group of Isma'ilis present for their belief (that Isma'il did not die, instead he just staged his death as dissimulation so that he may not be killed) is the following: Muhammad, Isma'il's full brother, who was a young child at that time, went to the coffin in which Isma'il was placed, lifted the shroud and saw that Isma'il opened both his eyes. He went to his father in a startled state and said, "My brother is alive! My brother is alive!" His father said, "This is how the descendants of the Messenger (s.'a.w.a.), appear in the after-life."(۳)Dr. Mustafa Ghalib quoted it in A'lamu 'l-Isma'iliyyah, (pp.۱۶۲-۳) and Tarikhu 'd-da'wati 'l-Isma'iliyyah, p.۱۳۹ without

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۱- Ghalib, M., Tarikh, p.۱۴۳; A'lam, p.۱۶۴.

۲- Ibid., p.۱۴۳; ibid., p.۱۶۵.

۳- ash-Shahristani, al-Milal, vol.۱, p.۱۹۱; as-Safadi, vol.۹, p.۱۰۲.

.refuting it

A logical explanation of this event – if it is true, although it seems far removed from truth is that Isma‘il did not die a real death; he just pretended to die so that the people may know his death; and then he disappeared after that. We may rightly question whether it is possible for a person to stage his own death to this extent to deceive so many people in general that they became convinced of his real death, they witnessed his burial and even signed on the testimony to that effect that he is placed in the grave and buried, and stays buried for a long time until he is dug out in the darkness ?of night? Is this logically possible

Moreover, it has already been mentioned that Isma‘il's full brother was ‘Abdullah al-Aftah, not Muhammad son of [al- Imam] as-Sadiq (‘a.s.), whose mother was a slave girl. And‘Abdullah, the full brother, was not that much younger than Isma‘il to be described as a child on the day of Isma‘il's death – by whichever date of the latter's !death you count

:C. Muhammad ibn Isma‘il

Muhammad ibn Isma‘il's Birth: Our discussion would be incomplete if we do not discuss about Muhammad ibn Isma‘il who was a contemporary of al-Imam al-Kazim (‘a.s.) on day of as-Sadiq's death when the imamate was transferred to al-Kazim (‘a.s.). We have already mentioned that Isma‘il had two sons, the eldest being .Muhammad and the youngest ‘Ali, and a daughter named Fatimah

Muhammad Qazwini quotes from

Dasturu 'l-munajjimin (foil B/٣٣۴) as follows: "Our Master Muhammad ibn Isma'il the Seventh, the Complete, the heir of as-Sadiq (may Allah be pleased with him) was born on ١٣th Dhi 'l-hijjah, year ١٢١ AH [٢٠th November ٧٣٩]. On the day of his grandfather as-Sadiq's death [٢۵th Shawwal ١۴٨/١۴th December ٧۶۵], he was twenty- seven years old."(١)The same date has been given by 'Arif Tamir in the table appended to al-Qasidatu 'sh-Shafiyah, p.

I have not found anything in the early Isma'ili sources other than what has been mentioned by ad-Da'i Idris who said, "Muhammad ibn Isma'il and his brother 'Ali were older in age than their uncles Musa,(٢) Ishaq and Muhammad, sons of as- Sadiq ('a.s.) . . . And Muhammad ibn Isma'il was eight years older than his brother ['Ali].(٣) This is different from the date given for Muhammad's birth in Dasturu 'l-munajjimin, for if we suppose that 'Ali ibn Isma'il was just a year older than Musa al- Kazim ('a.s.), who was born in the year ١٢٩ AH (and not ١٢٨), then 'Ali's birth year would be ١٢٨ AH.

And if Muhammad was eight years older than 'Ali, then his birth year would have been ١٢٠ AH or even earlier. Idris further writes, "A narrator who is trusted for his truthfulness has said: 'al-Imam Muhammad ibn Isma'il was twenty-six years old when his father died, and his brother 'Ali ibn Isma'il was a man who had attained maturity and was eighteen years old.'(۴)

I do not know which of

١- Jahan-gushaye Juwayni, vol.٣, p.١۴٨, (marginal notes), p.٣١١.

٢- al-Imam Musa al-Kazim ('a.s.), was born on ٧th Safar ١٢٩/٢٨th October ٧۴۶ – the most correct view – or ٧th Safar ١٢٨/٨th Noverber ٧۴۵.

٣- Idris ibn al-Hasan, 'Uyunu 'l-akhbar, vol.۴, pp.٣٣٣, ٣٣۴.

۴- Ibid. p.٣۵١.

the three dates of Isma'il's death had ad-Da'i Idris taken into consideration, because he has not given his death year although he confirms that Isma'il died before his father as-Sadiq ('a.s.): from the dates given for Isma'il's death, the closest to his father's death is ۱۴۵ AH and the remotest is۱۳۳ AH. (If we take ۱۴۵ AH, then Isma'il's .birth year would be ۱۱۹ AH since he lived for ۲۶ years

Dr. Mustafa Ghalib quotes from the same ad-Da'i Idris and also from ad-Da'i Ja'far ibn Mansur al-Yamani that they said, "Muhammad was a child at the time of Isma'il's death."(۱)Again Dr. Ghalib and Dr. Jamalu 'd-Din ash-Shayyal quote ad- Da'i Idris that ("Muhammad was a child of three years old when his father died."(۲

I really do not know which of the two is truthful in narrating the views of Idris ibn al-Hasan and which of the two conflicting views of the famous missionary Idris (who is !addressed by the Isma'ilis as "Sayyiduna ad-Da'i") is correct

Asaf A.A. Fyzee says that Zahid 'Ali writes in his book Madhhab "quoting ancient [Isma'ili] authorities, declares him [al-Kazim, 'a.s.], to a hijab (protector, veil) of the infant Imam Muhammad b. Isma'il"(۳) after the death of his grandfather as- Sadiq .(.('a.s

Ash-Shaykh 'Abdullah ibn al-Murtada says: "al-Imam Isma'il did not live after being designated except for a short time until he died. He left behind a wife who was pregnant with Muhammad al-Habib, and he inspired to this imam

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۱- Ghalib, M., A'lam, p.۴۴۷ quoting from ad-Da'i Idris in Zahru 'l-ma'ani, p.۴۷; Tarikhu .'d-da'wati 'l-Isma'iliyyah, p.۱۴۰ quoting from ad-Da'i Ja'far in Asraru 'n-nutaqa', p.۱۵

۲- Ghalib, M., A'lam, p.۵۵۹, quoting from Idris in Zahru 'l-ma'ani, pp.۴۷-۴۹;Itti'azu 'l-hunafa', vol.۱, p.۲۴ (marginal notes), quoting from Zahru 'l- ma'ani, pp.۴۷, ۴۹ (pub. by .(the orientalist Ivanow

۳- Fyzee, Asaf A. A., "The Isma'ilis", in Religion in the Middle East, by A.J.Arberry, vol.۲, ch.۱۷, p.۳۱۹; quoting Zahid 'Ali, Hamarē Isma'ili madhhab kā haqiqat awr us kā Nizām (Urdu), (Hyderabad, Deccan, ۱۳۷۳/۱۹۵۴), pp.۱۶۱-۲. He describes Zahid 'Ali as "a learned

Daudi Bohora of priestly extraction . . . who produced two volumes of remarkable learning and critical acumen on the history and tenets of the Western Isma‘ilis."

who was still in the womb of his mother – the secrets of imamate. And after the – death of Isma'il, his brother Musa came to his father al-Imam Ja'far saying, ('Designate the imamate for me after my brother.' He replied, 'Be silent, O Musa!'"(۱)

Mustafa Ghalib says, "It is proven from the Isma'ili sources that the birth of Muhammad ibn Isma'il was in the year ۱۳۲ AH (۷۴۹-۷۵۰ CE)"(۲) Then he says, "At the time of his father's death in ۱۵۸ AH (۷۷۵ CE), Isma'il was twenty-six years of age."(۳)Then he further says, "Whoever says that Muhammad was a child when his father died in the year ۱۴۵ AH (۷۶۲ CE) is indeed mistaken. This is the date of Isma'il's disappearance, not his death." (۴)Mustafa Ghalib also insists that Muhammad ibn (Isma'il was older than his uncle al-Kazim ('a.s.).(۵)

All these statements are contradictions upon contradictions! The confusion is clear even by taking one statement as true; for example: If Muhammad ibn Isma'il was born in ۱۳۲ AH, then how can he be older than his uncle born in ۱۲۹ AH? And how can he ?be considered a child of three years of age in the year ۱۴۵ AH

Arif Tamir says, "Muhammad was born in the year ۱۴۱ AH (۷۵۸-۷۵۹ CE)." (۶)Then he' says, "At the time of his father's death, he was fourteen years old."(۷) Although he dates the year of Isma'il's death to be ۱۴۵ AH (۷۶۲-۳ CE);(۸) then he mentions that it has been listed in the index

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.Ghalib, M., Tarikh, pp.۱۳۹-۴۰, quoting from al-Falaku'd-dawwar, p.۱۲۵ -۱

.Ghalib, M., A'lam, p.۴۴۷; Tarikh, p.۱۴۴ -۲

.Ibid., p.۴۴۸; ibid., p.۱۴۴ -۳

.Ibid., pp.۱۶۵, ۴۴۷-۸; ibid., p.۱۵۲ -۴

.Ibid., p.۱۶۳ -۵

.Tamir, 'A., al-Imamah fi 'l-Islam, p.۱۸۱; al-Qaramitah, pp.۴۴, ۴۷ -۶

.Ibid., p.۱۸۰; ibid., p.۴۷ -۷

Ibid -۸

of al-Qaramitah: "Isma‘il ibn Ja‘far (١٠١–١٥٩ AH)" and "Muhammad ibn Isma‘il (١٤١–١٩٣AH)"(١). Then he, himself, mentions in the list supplemented to al-Qasidatu 'sh-Shafiyah: "Isma‘il ibn Ja‘far al-Maktum [the one kept in concealment] (١١٣–١٤٥ AH)" and "Muhammad ibn Isma‘il al-Maymun [the auspicious] (١٢١–١٩٣)"(٢)

Thus ‘Arif Tamir contradicts himself in the birth year of Isma‘il between ١٠١ and ١١٣ AH, and in his death between ١٤٥ and ١٥٩ AH; then his contradicts himself in the birth year of Muhammad ibn Isma‘il between ١٢١ and ١٤١ AH. Thirdly, he contradicts himself by saying that Muhammad ibn Isma‘il was fourteen years old at the death of his father: for if we take ١٤١ AH, then Muhammad was only four years old at the time of his father's death in the year ١٤٥ AH; or eighteen years old if his father died in ١٥٩. However, if we take ١٢١ as Muhammad's birth year, then he was twenty-four years old at the time of his father's death in the year ١٤٥ AH, or thirty-eight years if his father died in ١٥٩ AH!

Muhammad ibn Isma‘il's Death: There is disagreement among the Isma‘ili sources that I have surveyed on the year of Muhammad ibn Isma‘il's death. Dr. Mustafa Ghalib and ‘Arif Tamir have stated ١٩٣/٨٠٨-٨٠٩(٣) while the Syrian da‘i, Nuru 'd-Din Ahmad, in his Fusul wa Akhbar, writes ١٦٩/٧٨٥-٧٨٦ as the death year of Muhammad ibn Isma‘il.(٤)The second date is definitely wrong because Muhammad lived for many years after that as will be mentioned below.

There

١- Ibid., p.٤٤.

٢- al-Qasidatu 'sh-Shafiyah, p.٩٨.

٣- Ghalib, M., A‘lam, p.٤٥٠; Tarikh, p.١٤٦; Tamir, ‘A., al-Imamah, p.١٨١; al- Qaramitah, . pp.٤٤, ٤٨; al-Qasidatu 'sh-Shafiiyah, p.٩٨ (appendix).

٤- - al-A‘zami, M. H., al-Haqaiqu 'l-khafiyyah ‘ani 'sh-Shi‘ti 'l-Fatimiyyah wa 'l-Ithna-‘ashariyyah, p.٥٦; Tamir, ‘A. Jami‘atu 'l-jami‘ah (sec. ed.) p.١٥.

is, however, an even greater disagreement among the Isma'ilis over the occultation of Muhammad ibn Isma'il: Where did he travel? Which cities did he visit? Where did he finally reach in his journey and where did he settle down? Where did he die and where was he buried? We are only concerned with the last question al-Juwayni and al-Hamadani have mentioned that Muhammad

Finally traveled to the Damavand Mountains in Rayy and took refuge in them, and settled down in a village which has been described by a variety of names: Samlah or Shamlah or Salambah(١).Muhammad Qazwini says that probably all these names are corruption of the correct name Shalambah that was at that time the capital of Damavand district.(٢) Yaqut says that the village is known as Shalanbah. However, the (first name is the most correct.(٣

Ad-Da'i Idris gives a lengthy story of Muhammad ibn Isma'il's journeys during his concealment, moving from one town to another until he settled down in Sabur and died there, and that his grave is in Farghana.(۴) Mustafa Ghalib relates a similar story from ad-Da'i Ja'far ibn Mansur al-Yamani.(۵) But Sabur or Shapur was a town or a district in the province of Fars in southern Iran(۶) while Farghana, if meant to be the one famous by this name, then it is a town and a specious rural district situated in !Transoxania.(٧) There are thousands of miles between the two

Mustafa Ghalib narrates a similar story from ad-Da'i Idris himself, from his book Zahru 'l-ma'ani (p.۵۴), and

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١ - al-Juwayni, Jahan-gushaye Juwayni, vol.٣, p.١۴٨; Jami'u't-tawarikh, (section on "Isma'iliyyah), p.١١.

٢ - Qazwini, M., Mu'jamu 'l-buldan, vol.٣, p.٣۶٠.

٣ - Ibn Khurdadhbih, Marasidu 'l-ittila', p.١١٨; Guy Le Strange, The Lands of the Eastern Caliphate, p.٣٧١.

۴ - Idris ibn al-Hasan,'Uyunu 'l-akhbar, vol.۴, pp.٣۵١-۶.

۵ - Ghalib, M., Tarikh, p.١۴۶, quoting from Asraru 'n-nutaqa', p.۶٠.

Qazwini, M., Mu'jamu 'l-buldan, vol.۳, pp.۱۶۷-۸; Ibn Khurdadhbih, Marasidu 'l-ittila', -۶ vol.۲, pp. ۶۸۰-۱; Mu'jam ma ista'jam, vol.۳, p.۷۱۱; al- Ansab, vol.۷, p.۷; The Lands of the .Eastern Caliphate, pp.۲۶۲-۳

Qazwini, M., Mu'jamu 'l-buldan, vol.۴, p.۲۵۳; Marasidu 'l-ittila', vol.۳, p.۱۰۲۹; ar-Rawdu -۷ 'l-mi'tar, p.۴۴۰; Ibn Hawqal, pp.۴۲۰-۲; al-Ansab, foil ۴۲۴/۲; The Lands of the Eastern .Caliphate, pp.۴۷۶-۷

mentions Nayshapur (the famous town in Khurasan [Iran]) instead of Sabur.(١) Either Mustafa Ghalib has wrongly quoted Idris or Idris has contradicted himself in his two books. However it may be, they have done nothing to resolve the issue because there are thousands of miles between Nayshapur, the old and modern Iranian town, and Farghana, the town in Turkmenistan beyond the borders of Afghanistan, which is also estimated at thousands of miles.

If this story of theirs is true, then there was no need to change the name from Sabur to Nayshapur in order to re-write the history, because Farghana (as mentioned by Yaqut) or Farghana (as mentioned by as-Sam'ani) was a village in Fars in the same region where Sabur is located(٢).

This is further verified by a statement from the Syrian da'I Nuru d-Din Ahmad who mentions Nahawand instead of Damavand and says, "Verily Muhammad left that town [Nahawand] under the darkness and concealment for the town of Sabur, and from there to Farghana, and then he went to 'Askar-Mukram and died therein."(٣)'Askar-Mukram is a town near Ahwaz which still exists in Khuzistan in southern Iran(٤).

Mustafa Ghalib quotes ash-Shaykh 'Abdullah ibn Murtada, a Syrian Isma'ili, as follows: "Surely Muhammad returned from his journey to Iraq which he left in the year ١٩٣ AH [٨٠٩ CE, the year in which the 'Abbasid Caliph Harun ar-Rashid died] to Tadmur." (۵) Mustafa Ghalib himself writes, "It is true that Muhammad traveled to the countries mentioned earlier; however, the Syrian Isma'ili sources mention that he

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١- Ghalib, M., A'lam, pp.۴۴٩, ۵۵٢; Tarikh, p.١۴٧

٢- al-Ansab, foil ۴٢۴/٢; al-Lubab, vol.٢, p.۴٢٣, Mu'jamu 'l-buldan, vol.۴, p. ٢۵٣; Marasidu 'l-ittila', vol.٢, p.١٠٢٩; al-Qamus, vol.٣, p.١١١; Taju 'l-'arus, vol.۶, p.٢۵, this is supported by the statement of ad-Da'i Nuru 'd- Din Ahmad.

٣- al-Haqaiqu 'l-khafiyyah, p.۵۶; Jami'atu 'l-jami'ah, p.١۵.

۴- Mu'jamu 'l-buldan, vol.۴, pp.١٢٣-۴; Marasidu 'l-ittila', vol.٢, p.٩۴١; ar- Rawdu 'l-mi'tar,

.p.۴۲۰; al-Ansab, vol.۹, pp.۲۹۷-۸; The Lands of the Eastern Caliphate, pp.۲۳۶-۷, ۲۴۶-۷

.Ghalib, M., Tarikh, p.۱۴۶, quoting from al-Falaku 'd-dawwar, p.۱۳۱ -۵

finally settled in the Syrian town of Tadmur in ١٩١ AH (٨٠۶ CE) where he died in the year ١٩٣ AH, and was buried in the mountain located in the north-west which is known as ('Maqam Mawlay Muhammad'Ali'." This is also confirmed by 'Arif Tamir.(١)

It is realy strange to read what ad-Da'i Idris write about Muhammad ibn Isma'il while he was in Medina: al-Imam [Muhammad] had built an underground cellar in his house in Medina where he used to hide from the enemy. When ar-Rashid's men came to capture him, he entered the cellar and disappeared in it; they searched for him but could not find him."(٢) These authorities of Isma'ili did not realize that underground cellars never existed in Medina, neither in past nor in present; it seems that that the myth of "disappearance in the cellar" which is wrongfully attributed to the Imamiyyah tempted them invent a cellar for their imam in occultation in which they have !concealed him

There is no clear indication in the Imamiyyah sources about the date of birth and death of Muhammad ibn Isma'il. However, as a circumstantial evidence we have a hadith about his slander

against al-Imam al-Kazim ('a.s.), which clearly shows that, he died unexpectedly in Baghdad in ١٧٩/٧٩٠. This is confirmed by one of the most prominent and famous genealogist, ash-Sharif Abu 'l-Hasan Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn Muhammad al-Husayni, known as Shaykhu 'sh-Sharaf al-'Ubaydali (٣٣٨/٩۵٠–۴٣٧/١٠۴٩). He says, "This (Muhammad is known as 'Imam of al-Maymuniy- yah' (whom we will discuss later

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١ - Ghalib, M., A'lam, pp.۴۴٨-۵٠; Tarikh, pp.١۴۵-۶; Tamir, 'A., al-Imamah, p.١٨١, al-Qaramitah, p.۴٨.

٢ - Ghalib, M., ibid, p.۴۵١; ibid., p.١۴٩, quoting from Zahru 'l-ma'ani, pp.۵٢-۵٣.

(and his grave is in Baghdad."(۱)

Some scholars say that the present grave at the corner of al-Fadl mosque, in al-Fadl neighbor hood of Baghdad, is the grave of Muhammad ibn Isma'il.(۲)

Muhammad ibn Isma'il's Imamate: Muhammad ibn Isma'il is counted as one of the Isma'ili imams. And it is generally through him – according to the most common sayings – that the Fatimid caliphs trace their genealogy to al-Imam as- Sadiq ('a.s.), although the various Isma'ili sub-sects are divided on the line which connects 'Ubaydullah al-Mahdi (b. ۲۵۹/۸۷۳), the first Fatimid caliph (۲۹۷/۹۱۰–۳۲۲/۹۳۴), to Muhammad ibn Isma'il. The Musta'liyyah disagree with the Persian Nizariyyah on the genealogical chart; and both disagree with the Indian Nizariyyah; and all disagree with what the Druze has to say on this issue. They do not only disagree in names, but also in numbers of the ancestors.(۳)

Asaf A.A. Fyzee writes, "After Muhammad there followed three hidden Imams; and it is impossible to be certain whether they were historical persons or fictitious Imams created by the founders of the movement."(۴)

It does not concern us here whether for the Isma'ilis Muhammad was the seventh Imam or the eighth; whether he was a complete (Tamm) imam or incomplete. All the Isma'ilis say that Isma'il designated his son Muhammad as the next imam.(۵) And they have another argument also: Since the imamate was designated for Isma'il, it was impossible to remove it from him, and that it must continue among his descendants forever, and that it must be transferred

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۱- Al-Majdi, foil ۳۱/B, 'Umdatu't-talib, p.۲۲۴.

۲- Maraqidu 'l-ma'arif, vol.۲, pp.۱۶۹-۷۱; Tuhfatu 'l-'alim, vol.۱, p.۱۴.

۳- Ivanow, W., "Isma'iliya", in Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, ed. H.A.R. Gibb and J.H. Kramers (Leiden, ۱۹۵۳) p.۱۷۹.

۴- Fyzee, Asaf A. A., "The Isma'ilis", in Religion in the Middle East, by A.J.Arberry, vol.۲, ch.۱۷, pp.۳۱۹-۲۰.

۵- Idris, ad-Da‘i, ‘Uyunu 'l-akhbar, vol.۴, pp.۳۳۴, ۳۴۹, ۳۵۰, ۳۵۱; Ghalib, M., A‘lam, p.۴۴۷; Tarikh, pp.۱۴۳, ۱۵۲.

to the eldest son of the preceding imam. This is how Muhammad inherited the imamate with the exclusion of his uncles, and his children inherited it with the exclusion of their cousins.(١)

At times they even go beyond this and claim that as-Sadiq ('a.s.) himself designated his grandson Muhammad for imamate after the death of Isma'il.(٢)

We have already refuted the Isma'ilis' claim that al-Imam as- Sadiq ('a.s.) had designated Isma'il while the second and third claims mentioned above have been refuted by ash-Shaykhu 'l-Mufid We shall talk later on about the imamate of al-Imam Musa al-Kazim ('a.s.) and the stand of Muhammad ibn Isma'il.

Muhammad and The Maymuniyyah Link: The state- ment of Shaykhu 'sh-Sharaf al-'Ubaydali has already been mentioned in where he has described Muhammad ibn Isma'il as the "Imam of al-Maymuniyyah". This description, going back to the fourth Islamic century, is unique in the sense that it relates Muhammad ibn Isma'il to the Maymuniyyah as a sect rather than a family.

Although the historians of religious sects have referred to this relationship and mentioned it in different ways, but they all differ from the real meaning of this expression. On the one hand, they have used al-Maymuniyyah, in the Isma'ili context, only as a family affinity not as a sect. On the other hand, they have used al-Maymuniyyah as a name for a group of al-'Ajaridah, a sub-sect of the Kharijites which is affiliated to Maymun ibn Khalid or Maymun ibn 'Imran (d. ١٠٠/٧١٨).(٣)

The heresiographers, however, mentioned

١- ar-Razi, Abu Hatim, ad-Da'i, az-Zinah, pt.٣, p.٢٨٩; al-Haqqani, Ahmad ibn Ya'ub, ad-Da'i, al-Imamah, as quoted by Dr. M. Ghalib in al-Imamah wa qaimu 'l-qiyamah, p.٢۶۶; Idris, ad-Da'i, 'Uyunu 'l-akhbar, vol.۴, pp.٣۴٩-٥٠; Ghalib, M., A'lam, pp.١۶٣, ۴۴٧; Tarikh, p.١٣٨.

٢- The Rev. ad-Da'i as-Suri, al-Qasidatu 's-Suriyah, p.۶٧; al-Yamani, Ja'far ibn Mansur,

ad-Da'i, Asraru 'n-nutaqa', as quoted by Dr. Hasan Ibrahim Hasan, Tarikhu 'd-dawlati 'l-Fatimiyyah, p.۴۸۷; al-Hindi, al-Hasan ibn Nuh, al-Azhar, as quoted by Dr. M. Ghalib in Tarikh, pp.۱۵۱-۲. Thus do the historians of religious sub-sects quote from their own sects; see, al- Fusulu 'l-mukhtarah, vol.۲, p.۲۴۸; al-Maqalat wa 'l-firaq, p.۸۱; Firaqu 'sh-Shi'ah, p.۵۸.

۳- Maqalatu 'l-Islamiyyin, vol.۱, pp.۱۶۴-۵; al-Fisal, vol.۴, pp.۱۹۰, ۱۹۱; ash- Shahristani, al-Milal, vol.۱, p.۱۲۹; az-Zirkili, al-A'lam, vol.۷, p.۳۴۱.

a group known as) "al-Qaddahiyyah" and said that it is one of the Batini sects, which) traces its origin to ‘Abdullah ibn Maymun al-Qaddah. The only indication that there was a sect known as al-Maymuniy-yah which believed in Muhammad ibn Isma‘il as its imam comes from Shaykhu 'sh-Sharaf, as mentioned above. ‘Arif Tamir, the contemporary Isma‘ili, describes al-Maymuniyyah as follows: "A Ja‘fariyyah sub-sect which believed in the imamate of Ja‘far ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq, and which was led by Maymun al- Qaddah, a Persian who was among the students of Ja‘far ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq. This group is considered as the foundation upon which the (Isma‘iliyyah was built later on."(١)

The two prominent persons in the Maymuniyyah family who were the most famous personalities in the Isma‘iliyyah call are Maymun al-Qaddah and his son ‘Abdullah ibn Maymun. I do not wish to study these two persons in the light of the Imamiyyah .sources because the discussion is indeed very lengthy and comprehensive

I may summarize it by saying that Maymun al- Qaddah, a client (mawla) of Banu Makhzum, was from Mecca; he narrated ahadith from Imams as-Sajjad (٣۶/۶۵٩–٩۴/٧١٢), al- Baqir (۵٧/۶٧۶–١١۴/٧٣٣), and as-Sadiq (٨٣/٧٠٢–١۴٨/٧۶۵), peace be upon them; and he was known as "al-Qaddah, i.e, the arrow sharpener", because of his profession. His son, ‘Abdullah, narrated ahadith from al-Baqir and as-Sadiq (‘a.s.). ‘Abdullah is considered as trustworthy (thiqah) by the Imamiyyah traditionalists; and although what the non-Imamiyyah biographers have written about him concurs with the Imamiyyah narration, but they do not considered him

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.Tamir, ‘A., al-Imamah, p.٨٨ -١

.as trustworthy

Muhammad Qazwini quotes from Dasturu 'l-munajjimin (foil B/٣٣٣) describing "Maymun al-Qaddah among the famous companions of al-Baqir ('a.s.)", and when he discusses as-Sadiq ('a.s.) he says that among his famous men were Abu 'l-Khattab, al-Mufaddal ibn'Umar and Jabir ibn Hayyan as-Sufi, author of bibliography books, and 'Abdullah ibn Maymun (١). . .Al-'Allamah Muhammad Qazwini, the famous research scholar, has studied this issue extensively in his annotations to the Johan- gushaye Juwayni (vol.٣, pp.٣١٣-٤٣), and through him it reached the Orientalist sources, and .finally found its way into the contemporary Isma'ili literature

Neither do I wish to comment on what the opponents of the Isma'iliyyah have said on this issue – they have tried to trace the genealogy of the Fatimids and the faith of the Isma'iliyyah to the Maymuniyyah family; and then have traced the Maymuniyyah family itself, sometimes, to the Jews, and at other times to the Magians! They have also labeled the Isma'iliyyah with many accusations; the lightest ones are atheism, !heresy, and secret adherence to Daysaniyyah [heretic] idea

I only wish to briefly state what I have found in the Isma'iliyah sources. The Isma'ili writers disagree with non-Isma'ilis in computation of the era of Maymun and his son 'Abdullah. Non- Isma'ili sources are unanimous in saying that Maymun lived only during the first half of the second Islamic century (eighth century of CE), and that his son 'Abdullah's life did not extend beyond the early part of the second half of that .century

The Isma'ili sources, on

١- .Al-Juwayni, Jahan-gushaye Juwayni (marginal notes and additions), vol.٣, p.٣٢٣

the other hand, state that Maymun settled down in Salamiyyah, in Syria, and died there towards the end of the second Islamic century (١)(early ninth century of CE); and that his son ‘Abdullah was born in the last year of that century (٢٠٠/٨١۶), and that he died and was buried in ٢٧٠/٨٨٣-٨٨۴ in Salamiyyah.(٢) Ibnu 'n-Nadim mentions that ‘Abdullah was alive in the year ٢۶١/٨٧۵;(٣) and al-Hamadani quotes Isma‘ili sources saying that ‘Abdullah ibn Maymun al-Qaddah settled down in‘ Askar-Mukram in the year ٢٩۵/٩٠٧-٩٠٨; and that year was the beginning of his missionary activities. Then he describes a lengthy missionary career for ‘Abdullah which shows that the latter lived (for many more years.(۴

Asaf A.A. Fyzee says, "Some historians identify Imam Muhammad b. Isma‘il as the spiritual father of Maymun al- Qaddah;(۵) while the sectarians declare him to be the seventh Imam, the seventh wasi, the seventh natiq and the seventh rasul, who completely abrogated the shari‘a of the Prophet Muhammad.(۶)These are large .claims and are hardly compatible with any of the known forms of Islam

The career of the seventh Imam Muhammad b. Isma‘il raises the first of the" historical puzzles. Who were this Maymun al- Qaddah and his son ‘Abdallah? And what was their relationship with Imam Muhammad b. Isma‘il? Here the historians differ vitally. That he was the younger contemporary of Imam Ja‘far seems tolerably clear;(٧) and the majority of historians identify him (or one of them) as

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١- Ghalib, M., A‘lam, p.۵۶١; Tarikh, p.١۶١; al-Hamadani also quotes from them in Jami‘u 't-tawarikh (the Fatimid section), pp.١٣, ٢٢.

٢- Ghalib, M., A‘lam, p.٣۴٧

٣- bnu 'n-Nadim, al-Fihrist, p.٢٣٨.

۴- al-Hamadani, Jami‘u 't-tawarikh, "Isma‘iliyyan wa Fatimiyyan" pp.١١-١٢;Jahan- gushaye Juwayni, vol.٣ (marginal notes and annotations), p.٣٣٧.

۵- Fyzee’s note: Bernard Lewis, The Origins of Isma‘ilism, (Cambridge, ١٩۴٠), p.۴٩.

۶- Fyzee's note: Zahid ‘Ali, Tarikh (Hyderabad, ١٩۴٨), pp.۵٣٨ff, on the basis of Kanzu 'l-walad and Anwaru 'l-latifah, two of the most secret and authoritative of the

Musta‘lian texts. This view has, however, been refuted by Hasan ‘Ali Sarangpuri, Damighu 'l-buhtan (a comprehensive but repetitive official refutation of Zahid ‘Ali's works in three volumes, published by the Jami‘atu 's-Sayfiyyah, Surat, n.d.), pp.۳۰, ۱۱۵ff., ۱۵۴, and other places.

۷- This means that ‘Abdullah's life span was not much later than that of al-Imam as-Sadiq (‘a.s.) as claimed by some Isma‘ilis quoted earlier.

the real founder of Isma'ilism. Bernard Lewis, and above all Zahid 'Ali, accept the theory; while Ivanow rejects it and says that Maymun and 'Abdallah are the twin .myths created by unsympathetic historians

The matter cannot be said to be settled, but the weight of authority is on the side of Zahid 'Ali, a learned Da'udi Bohora(۱)of priestly extraction, fully trained in Western methods of critical research, who produced two volumes of remarkable learning and (critical acumen on the history and the tenets of the Western Isma'ilis."(۲

I do not wish to comment here on what Fyzee says about the Isma'ilis' belief that they regard Muhammad ibn Isma'il as the seventh messenger (rasul); or to quote what has been mentioned in the Isma'ili sources – ancient or modern – that Muhammad ibn Isma'il has abrogated the shari'ah which preceded him, lifting the apparent obligations, since through his imamate a tumult was raised and (that is why) they call him Qaimu 'l- Qiyamah interpreting that all the signs of the Day of Resurrection signify .his appearance

Thus all obligations of the shari'ah according to them became null and void. Nor do I wish to comment on how the later day Isma'ilis tried to explain away this phenomenon in order to safeguard themselves against the accusation of totally denying the shari'a. Also, I do not wish to start this discussion, and what Fyzee has .alluded to suffice us from further elaboration on this issue

I only wish to state here the relationship mentioned by the

۱- Daudi Bohora is the bigger of the two branches of the Musta'liyyah who are also known as Western Isma'ilis; the small branch of the Musta'liyyahis known as the Sulaymaniyyah. The opponent of the Western Isma'ilis (i.e., the Musta'liyyah) is the Eastern Isma'ilism, which is also known as the Nizariyyah, led at the present time by .the Agha Khan

۲- Fyzee, Asaf A. A. "The Isma'ilis" in Religion in the Middle East, by A.J. Arberry, vol.۲, .ch.۱۷, p.۳۱۹

Isma'ilis between Maymun and his son 'Abdullah on the one hand, and Isma'il and his son Muhammad on the other hand. ad-Da'i Idris and ad-Da'i Ja'far ibn Mansur al-Yamani say, "Verily al-Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq designated the responsibility of raising Muhammad ibn Isma'il, until he becomes mature, to Maymun ibn Ghaylan ibn Badr ibn Mihran ibn Sulayman [sic; it should be Salman, the famous companion of the Prophet] al- Farisi al-Qaddah who was the most sincere of his followers. He did so because Muhammad was a child of three years old at the death of his father Isma'il."(١)

In the ١٩٦٥ edition of his Tarikh, Mustafa Ghalib quotes a similar statement from 'Uyunu 'l-khbar of ad-Da'i Idris.(٢)

Then Ghalib published the 'Uyunu 'l-akhbar through Daru 't- Turathi 'l-Fatimi (Beirut) in ١٩٧٣. Interestingly, I was unable to find such a quotation in that book! I do not know whether the trust-worthy publisher deleted it from the text or the reliable narrator wrongfully ascribed a statement to ad-Da'i Idris?

Whatever may be the case, ad-Da'i Idris has contradicted the statement ascribed to him by Ghalib. He says, "al-Imam Isma'il ibn Ja'far ('a.s.), had special regard for 'Abdullah ibn Maymun and had appointed him as a hujjah for himself and his son Muhammad ibn Isma'il ('a.s.), and as a guide and a proof [for people] towards them . . ."(٣) He also said, "Maymun al-Qaddah was a hujjah for Isma'il, and his son 'Abdullah was a hujjah for Muhammad ibn Isma'il."(۴)

١- Ghalib, M., A'lam, pp.۴۴٧, ۵۵٩ quoting from Idris, Zahru 'l-ma'ani, pp.۴٧-۴٩; Ghalib, Tarikh, p.١۴٠, quoting from Ja'far ibn Mansur al-Yamani, Asraru 'n-nutaqa', MS, p.١۵; Itti'azu 'l-hunafa', vol.١, p.٢۴. In the marignal notes, Ghalib also adds the following reference: Zahru 'l- ma'ani, pp.۴٧ ۴٩ in the edition published by Ivanow in his book on the rise of the Fatimids in which he states that "Maymun is from the decendants of Salman, and Salman is from the descendants of Ishaq ibn Ya'qub." This would mean that the famous Salman al-Farisi (the Persian) was not a Persian instead he was a Jew! This would amount to a confession on part of the Isma'ilis that Maymun and his

!son ‘Abdullah were from Jewish origins

.Ghalib, M., Tarikh, (Beirut, Daru 'l-Andulus, ۲nd ed. ۱۹۶۵) p.۱۵۲ -۲

.Idris, ad-Da‘i, ‘Uyunu 'l-akhbar, vol.۴, p.۳۳۵ -۳

.Ibid, vol.۵, p.۱۵۹ -۴

If we recall what they have said concerning the date of Isma‘il's death and concerning the date of Muhammad ibn Isma‘il's birth, and compare it with what they say about Maymun and his son, we can see that it is contra- diction upon contradiction!

It is really strange to note that when Mustafa Ghalib reviews what has been mentioned in the Imamiyyah sources concerning Maymun and ‘Abdullah, he says, "The Shi‘ah Ithna-‘ashariyyah historians say that ‘Abdullah ibn Maymun played an important role in the history of Isma‘ilism

Since the beginning of the third Islamic century (ninth century CE) and that he was a narrator of hadith . . . The Shi‘i sources are unanimous that ‘Abdullah was a contemporary of Muhammad al-Baqir and his son Ja‘far as- Sadiq."(۱) This is how he falsely attributes statements to the Imamiyyah, which not even one of them has ever been men- tioned; and he attributes to them the life-span of ‘Abdullah, which clearly differs from what the Imamiyyah have written about Maymun and his son!

Isma‘ilis and the Designation of al-Kazim (‘a.s.) as Imam: After the death of al-Imam Ja‘far as-Sadiq (‘a.s.), a dis- pute took place (among the Shi‘ahs) as to who would succeed the Imam (‘a.s.), but the fact of the matter is what ad-Da‘i Idris, says "The majority of Shi‘ahs of as-Sadiq (‘a.s.), had gathered around Musa and had believed in his imamate. Musa had claimed imamate for himself; it is, however, said about him what has been said about Zayd ibn ‘Ali

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۱- Ghalib, M., A‘lam, p.۳۴۶.

ibn al-Husayn ('a.s.): 'It was done in taqiyyah in order to protect the imam; and that if he had gained the political power, he would have handed it over to its rightful owner (and made him the ruler.'(١)

It seems that the Isma'ilis were finally forced to confess that as-Sadiq ('a.s.) had designated his son Musa ('a.s.) as the next Imam. Asaf A.A. Fyzee says, "It appears that Isma'il was appointed the heir-apparent by the sixth Imam Ja'far, but later incurred the displeasure of his father. The causes are not known; but it is suggested that he was addicted to drink, and that Ja'far being displeased appointed his younger (son Musa Kazim to the Imamate in his last days."(٢)

Ivanow, the Orientalist who was sympathetic to the Isma'iliy- yah and is fondly described by Mustafa Ghalib as "the great Orientalist professor and greatest of the historians of Isma'iliy- yah movement in the twentieth century," clearly says that as-Sadiq appointed al-Kazim as his successor.(٣) Al-Juwayni and al-Hamadani also quote the Isma'iliyyah saying that "as-Sadiq ('a.s.), had first designated Isma'il, but when it was found that Isma'il was addicted to drink, he was displeased with his behav- iour and said, 'Change has occurred for Allah in case of Isma'il.' Thereafter he designated .his other son Musa

The followers of Isma'il say that 'Ja'far was an infallible Imam and had designated Isma'il; therefore, the first decision [of the Imam] is to be followed because it is inconceivable for Allah to change His decision. And

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١- Idris, ad-Da'i, 'Uyunu 'l-akhbar, vol.۴, p.٣٣۵.

٢- Fyzee, Asaf A. A. "The Isma'ilis", in Religion in the Middle East, by A.J.Arberry, vol.٢, ch.١٧, pp.٣١٨-٩.

٣- Ivanow, W., "The Isma'iliya", in Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, p.١٧٩.

that whatever the Imam does is right [he is not to be rebuked for it]; therefore, the (addiction to drinking does not harm the imamate of Isma'il.'(۱)

It has already been mentioned that al-Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq ('a.s.) had never ever designated Isma'il as the next imam; and that he had definitely appointed al-Kazim ('a.s.) to that position while Isma'il was still living; and that the hadith about bada' (change in Allah's decision) is not valid. We may add that if we accept that as-Sadiq ('a.s.) was an infallible Imam, then we must follow whatever he says; there can be no difference in the validity of the first or the second decision. It is not correct to say that we must abide by his first decision because he is infallible, and then say that he is mistaken in his second decision. This is true if we really believe in his imamate with .sincerity, not with hypocrisy and with ulterior motives

It appears that the justifications given above by the Isma'iliyyah for not following al-Imam Musa al-Kazim ('a.s.) have created more problems for them. They say that al-Imam as-Sadiq ('a.s.) designated al-Kazim ('a.s.) as the hijab (cover) over the actual imam. A relevant statement by ad-Da'i Idris has already been quoted above; he has also said, "Verily Musa al-Kazim was notmade an imam by as-Sadiq except as a cover for the [actual] master of affairs (Muhammad ibn Isma'il) so that his status may be hidden from the enemies, and so that the enemies

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۱- Jahan-gushaye Juwayni, vol.۳, p.۱۴۵; Hamadani, Jami'u 't-tawarikh, ("Isma'iliyan"), p.۱۰.

and opponents may not overcome him. [This cover will continues] until such time when the real imam can be in position to take over the responsibility of missionary activities in secret."(1)

Mustafa Ghalib quotes ad-Da'i Idris as follows, "When Ja'far as-Sadiq appointed his son Musa al-Kazim as a protector of his grandson Muhammad ibn Isma'il, the owner of religious right, Musa al-Kazim usurped the position excluding Muhammad ibn Isma'il. And this happened after the death of al-Imam Ja'far as- Sadiq."(2)This has also been mentioned by 'Arif Tamir.(3)

Asaf A.A. Fyzee also says, "There is, however, little doubt that Musa Kazim, did have some sort of rank in the Isma'ili hierarchy, for Zahid 'Ali, quoting ancient authorities, declares him to [be] a hijab (protector, veil) of the infant Imam Muhammad b. Isma'il, who ultimately became a usurper. Such usurpations, as we shall see later, were a common feature of traditional Isma'ili history."(4)

This is how they have presented the establishment of imamate of al-Kazim ('a.s.) based on treachery. But they could not sustain the accusation of treachery; therefore they started saying that al- Imam al-Kazim ('a.s.) maintained his loyalty for the hidden Imam till the last moment. Muhammad Qazwini quotes from Dasturu 'l-munajjimin (foil ۳۳۴/a) as follows, "It has been said that he – Musa al-Kazim – sacrificed himself for the sake of his nephew, Muhammad ibn Isma'il, when the 'Abbasids were looking for him."(5)Al-Juwayni and al-Hamadani narrate from the Isma'ili sources as follows: "Verily Musa ibn Ja'far sacrificed himself for Isma'il, and

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۱- Zahru 'l-ma'ani, pp.۴۷-۴۹ as quoted by Mustafa Ghalib, A'lam, p.۱۶۳;Tarikh, pp.۱۴۰, ۱۵۲.

۲- Ghalib, M., A'lam, p.۴۴۷, quoting from Zahru 'l-ma'ani, pp.۴۹, ۵۱.

۳- Tamir, 'A., al-Imamah, pp.۱۵۵, ۱۸۰.

۴- Fyzee, Asaf A. A., "The Isma'ilis", in Religion in the Middle East, by A.J.Arberry, vol.۲, ch.۱۷, p.۳۱۹; quoting Zahid 'Ali in Madhhab (Hyderabad, ۱۹۵۴), pp.۱۶۱-۲.

۵- Jahan-gushaye Juwayni, vol.۳ (marginal notes), p.۱۵۱.

(verily ‘Ali ibn Musa sacrificed himself for Muhammad ibn Isma‘il."(١)

Muhammad and ‘Ali ibn Isma‘il in Shi‘ite Literature

Nothing has come in the Imamiyyah sources that would reveal the personality of Muhammad ibn Isma‘il and his brother ‘Ali except what al-Kishshi has narrated through his sources from al-Imam as-Sadiq (‘a.s.) who said to his son ‘Abdullah al-Aftah (Isma‘il's full brother), "Now here you have the two sons of your brother [i.e., you take the custody of your nephews] for I am tired of their insolence; they both [i.e., Muhammad and ‘Ali sons of Isma‘il ibn Ja‘far] are snares of the Satan."(٢)The Imamiyyah sources also say that al-Imam Musa al-Kazim (‘a.s.) was always kind and charitable towards his two nephews, Muhammad and ‘Ali, the sons of Isma‘il, as we .will discuss later

The hadith about ‘Ali ibn Isma‘il's slander against his uncle, Musa ibn Ja‘far (‘a.s.), has been narrated by ash-Shaykhu 'l- Mufid (r.a.), in al-Irshad (Eng. transl. pp.۴۵١-٣). It has also been narrated by Abu 'l-Faraj al-Isbahani in Maqatilu 't-talibiyyin, (pp.۵٠٠-٢); ash-Shaykhu 't-Tusi in al-Ghaybah, (pp.٢١-٢٢); Ibn Shahrashub in al-Manaqib, (vol.۴, p.۴٠٨). Also see al-Fattal, Rawdatu 'l-wa‘izin, (p.٢١٨); Kashfu 'l-ghummah, (vol.٢, pp.٢٣٠-١); al-Bihar, (vol.۴٨, pp. ٢٣١-٢); Mu‘jam rijali 'l-hadith, (vol.١١,pp.٢٩١-٢. In this hadith itself, it says that "And Musa (‘a.s.), was friendly towards ‘Ali ibn Isma‘il ibn Ja‘far ibn ".Muhammad, and used to help and be charitable to him

Ibn Hazm says, "And this ‘Ali ibn Isma‘il is the one who slandered against his uncle, Musa ibn Ja‘far, with ar-Rashid until he was summoned

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Jahan-gushaye Juwayni, vol.٣, pp.١۵١-٢; Jami‘u 't-tawarikh, under the "Isma‘iliyan", -١ .p.١۶

al-Kishshi, Rijal, p.٢۶۵; Majma‘u 'r-rijal, vol.۵, pp.١۵٧-٨; Mu‘jam rijali 'l-hadith, vol.١١, -٢ .p.٢٩٢; vol.١۵, pp.١١۵-۶

to Baghdad escorted."(١) ash-Shaykhu 's-Saduq narrates through his chain of narration from Muhammad ibn Yahya as-Sawli (d. ٣٣٥/٩٤٧), the famous writer and historian who had close ties with the ‘Abbasid rulers of his time, that he has narrated through his sources the story of slandering in much more details. Among other things, he says that ‘Ali ibn Isma‘il had close ties with the Barmakids; and that whenever Yahya ibn Khalid al-Barmaki [the vizier of Harun ar-Rashid from ٧٨۶–٨٠٣

AH] went for hajj, ‘Ali ibn Isma‘il would approach him for material assistance which the former would oblige; and at time she would even ride with vizier in the same camel litter. He also mentions that the plan of slandering al-Imam al-Kazim (‘a.s.) was hatched during one of these journeys. The hadith ends as follows: "Musa ibn Ja‘far (‘a.s.), would order [money be given] for ‘Ali ibn Isma‘il and would trust him to the extent that some- times the letters sent to his Shi‘ahs would go out in the hand-writing of ‘Ali ibn Isma‘il. But then he felt repelled by him. When Harun ar-Rashid decided to travel back to Iraq (from one of his hajj trips), Musa ibn Ja‘far was informed that his nephew

Ali intended to travel with the sultan to Iraq. He sent for him and asked, 'Why do you‘ want to accompany the sultan?' ‘Ali said, 'Because I am in debt.' al-Kazim said, 'I will '.pay off your debts

Ali asked, 'Then what about my family's expenses?' al-Kazim replied, 'I will‘

.Jamharat ansabi 'l-‘Arab, p.۶٠ -١

.be responsible for them.' But still ‘Ali insisted on accompanying the sultan

Then al-Kazim sent to him three hundred dinar and four thousand dirham through his brother Muhammad ibn Isma‘il with the message: 'Use this for your needs and do not make my children orphans.' (۱) Probably, based on these contacts between the Barmakids and the children of Isma‘il, Mustafa Ghalib believes that the Barmakids had Isma‘ili tendencies.(۲) In spite of what has already been mentioned about Muhammad ibn Isma‘il and his brother having displeased al-Imam as- Sadiq (‘a.s.), we see that the latter willed a considerable part of the one-third of his estate for the (former when he made the will at the time of his death.(۳

As for al-Imam Musa ibn Ja‘far (‘a.s.), and his relationship with Muhammad ibn Isma‘il, Abu Nasr al-Bukhari, the famous scholar of genealogy, says, "Muhammad ibn Isma‘il ibn Ja‘far was with his uncle Musa al-Kazim (‘a.s.), writing the secret letters for him to his Shi‘ahs in distant parts of the land. But when [Harun] ar-Rashid came to Hijaz, Muhammad ibn Isma‘il slandered his uncle to him," – then the narrator mentions the wordings of slander, as will come later – "and disclosed his secrets. So ar-Rashid .arrested Musa al-Kazim (‘a.s.), imprison- ed him and caused his death

Thus Muhammad ibn Isma‘il gained favours with ar-Rashid, accompanied him to Iraq and died in Baghdad. Abu 'l-Hasan Musa [al-Kazim] (‘a.s.) prayed against him which Allah accepted concerning him and his children." Ibn Khida‘, another famous ,genealogist, says

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as-Saduq, ash-Shaykh, ‘Uyun akhbari 'r-Rida (‘a.s.), vol.۱, pp.۶۹-۷۲; al- Bihar, vol.۴۸, -۱ .pp.۲۰۷-۱۰; Takmilatu 'r-rijal, vol.۲, p.۱۵۰

.Ghalib, M., Tarikh, (marginal note), p.۱۴۵ -۲

Tahdhibu 'l-ahkam, vol.۹, p.۱۹۴; al-Wafi, vol.۱۳, p.۱۰; Wasailu 'sh- Shi‘ah, vol.۱۳, -۳ .pp.۳۶۳-۴

Musa al-Kazim ('a.s.), used to fear his nephew, Muhammad ibn Isma'il, and showed" kindness towards him but the latter did not cease from slandering him in presence of (the 'Abbasid sultan."(1)

This story of slandering has been narrated by al-Kulayni through his correct and reliable chain of narrators from 'Ali ibn Ja'far, the uncle of Muhammad ibn Isma'il ibn Ja'far, that he said, "Muhammad ibn Isma'il determined to travel to Baghdad in Rajab [179 AH(2)] while the Imam ('a.s.), was in Mecca for 'umrah." Then Muhammad ibn Isma'il along with his uncle

Ali ibn Ja'far went to al-Kazim ('a.s.), who was in Mecca, to give him a farewell visit.' ['Ali ibn Ja'far says:] "Then Muhammad went close to him [al-Kazim, 'a.s.], kissed his head and said, 'May I be made your ransom! Please advise me.' So he [the Imam, 'a.s.] said, 'I advise you to fear Allah concerning my blood!' In reply, Muhammad said, 'Whosoever intends evil for you, may Allah do the same to him;' and he kept praying .[.[to Allah] against whosoever intended evil for him [i.e., the Imam, 'a.s

Then he kissed his head and said, 'O uncle! Please advise me.' He ['a.s.] said, 'I advise you to fear Allah concerning my blood!' So, he said,'Whosoever intends evil for you, May Allah do so and so to him who intends evil for you.' Then he [again] kissed his ,('a.s.)'s head and said, 'O uncle! Please advise me.' And [again], he ['a.s.] said

I advise you to fear Allah concerning my'

1- See Sirru 's-silsilati 'l-'Alawiyyah, pp.35-36; al-Majdi, an-Nasab, foil B/31; Manaqib al Abi Talib, vol.4, p.326; 'Umdatu 't-talib, pp.223-4; al- Fusulu 'l-fakhriyyah fi 'n-nasab, .p.143

2- The same year in which Harun did 'umrah (minor pilgrimage) in Ramadan, and in .which he had al-Imam al-Kazim ('a.s.) arrested

blood!' prayed against one who wishes ill for him ('a.s.) . . ."Then he Then al-Kazim ('a.s.) sent through 'Ali ibn Ja'far three hundred dinar and four thousand dirham to .Muhammad ibn Isma'il

Ali continues the narration: "I went to Muhammad ibn Isma'il and gave him the first' hundred [dinar], and so he became extremely happy and prayed for his uncle. Then I gave him the remaining two hundred [dinar], and he became so happy that I thought he would return [to Medina] and not go out [to visit Harun who was also present in Mecca at that time]. Then I gave him the rest of the three thousand dirham. But lo! He went right away to Harun, greeted him by using the title of caliphate and said, 'I never thought that there are two caliphs on the earth until I saw my uncle Musa ibn Ja'far being greeted by the title of caliphate.' Then Harun sent hundred thousand dirham to him, but Allah afflicted him with angina, and so he never was able to see or touch a (dirham of it!"(١

Al-Kishshi has narrated the same with much more details in which he says that Muhammad ibn Isma'il went to see Harun in the same dress in which he had traveled from Medina and refused to change. He greeted Harun by saying, "O Leader of the Believers! There are two caliphs on the earth: Musa ibn Ja'far in Medina who receives ,revenues and you in Iraq who receives revenues!" Harun said

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al-Kafi, vol.١, pp.۴٨۵-۶, ١٢٩۵; al-Wafi, vol.٢, p.١٨٩; Mir'atu 'l-'qul, vol.۶, pp. ۶٨-٧٠, where -١ ".al-Majlisi comments that this hadith is "sahih, i.e., correct, reliable

By God?" He replied, "Yes, by God!" Harun ordered that he be given one-hundred" .thousand dirham

When Muhammad ibn Isma'il accepted the money and carried it to his house, an angina attack seized him during the night and he died. The money was returned back [to Harun] which he had brought with him.(۱) Probably what his brother 'Ali had done – hitting two birds with one stone, as he imagined – when he got some money from his uncle al-Kazim ('a.s.) through his brother Muhammad, who carried the money to him .as stated in the previous paragraph and some other money obtained from Harun

When he slandered his uncle in the latter's presence – prompted Muhammad to visit his uncle first before going to Harun for slandering so that he may gain whatever he can, first from his uncle and then from the sultan – the money he could not obtain from others! It is obvious that the best way to milk a suspecting sultan is by providing "information" which he likes to hear about his potential opponents, more so when the informers are people like Muhammad and 'Ali ibn Isma'il, and the rulers are people like Harun! What other factor could have motivated Muhammad ibn Isma'il to visit his uncle when he had already intended to visit Harun to slander his uncle which ?eventually led to the latter's death

If al-Kazim ('a.s.) had been in Medina, when Muhammad ibn Isma'il decided to travel [to Iraq], then there is ground to excuse

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۱ - al-Kishshi, Rijal, pp.۲۶۳-۸۵; Majma'u 'r-rijal, vol.۵, pp.۱۵۵-۶; al-Bihar,vol.۴۸, pp.۲۳۹-۴۰; .Mu'jam rijali 'l-hadith, vol.۱۵, pp.۱۵۵-۶

Muhammad that he was compelled – out of courtesy which is expected from a nephew for his uncle in spite of ill feelings – to give his uncle a farewell visit. But since his uncle was out of Medina and had left for Mecca to perform ‘umrah, then Muhammad had a good excuse to leave Medina directly for Iraq with- out meeting his .uncle who was out of reach

I cannot find any explanation for such odd behaviour of Muhammad and his departure to Mecca, thus creating long distance between himself and Iraq, while he could make his trip as short as possible, not contrariwise, being in such a hurry to meet Harun, other than what I have mentioned above. Otherwise, what prompted him to go to Mecca first, and then travel from there to Iraq, since the distance ?between Mecca and Iraq is longer, if the explanation is other than what I have given

The Isma‘ili sources say that Zubaydah bint Ja‘far, Abu Ja‘far al-Mansur (reigned ۱۵۰/۷۶۷–۲۱۶/۸۳۱), the cousin and the favourite wife of Harun, and the mother of his eldest son Muhammad al-Amin, had clandestine ties with Muhammad ibn Isma‘il with .whom she used to communicate the secret informa- tion of the caliphate

They say that she was a secret follower of the Isma‘ili sect.(۱) The events on which the Isma‘ili writers base their conclusion – although I strongly believe them to be fabricated because they do not reconcile with the historical realities that we know of – reveal

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Idris, ad-Da‘i, ‘Uyunu 'l-akhbar, vol.۴, p.۳۵۲; Ghalib M., A‘lam, p.۴۴۹;Tarikh, pp.۱۴۵, - ۱ .۱۴۷

the clandestine nature of contacts between Muhammad ibn Isma‘il and the ‘Abbasid establishment. The Isma‘ili writers, naturally, present this relationship in a context of fabricated events in order to conceal its negative connotations!

Muhammad ibn Isma‘il devised a novel scheme in the series of actions, which led to the arrest of al-Imam al-Kazim (‘a.s.), his long-term imprisonment, and then his martyrdom by poison. He wanted to conceal his intentions from his uncle ‘Ali ibn Ja‘far, and divert the suspicion from himself towards his other uncle, his namesake, Muhammad son of Ja‘far as-Sadiq (‘a.s.), (۱۴۴/۷۶۱–۲۰۳/۸۱۹). Muhammad ibn Ja‘far is the famous revolu- tionary who started the uprising in Mecca and Medina in ۱۹۹/۸۱۴–۲۰۰/۸۱۵ coinciding with the uprising in Kufah by Abu's- Saraya.

He believed in the Zaydi doctrine of armed revolt against tyranny and unjust rulers and on the top of them were the‘Abbasid tyrants. He worked for his cause and even urged his brothers to do the same.

ash-Shaykhu 's-Saduq narrates through his sources from ‘Ali ibn Ja‘far as follows: "Muhammad ibn Isma‘il ibn Ja‘far ibn Muhammad came to me and said, 'Muhammad ibn Ja‘far went to Harun ar-Rashid, greeted him by the title of caliphate and then said, "I never thought that there were two caliphs on the earth until I saw my brother Musa ibn Ja‘far being greeted by the title of caliphate."(۱)

Probably what prompted Muhammad ibn Isma‘il to divert the suspicion on Muhammad ibn Ja‘far was the realization that al-Imam al-Kazim (‘a.s.) was aware of his intention for

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۱- as-Saduq, ash-Shaykh, ‘Uyun akhbari 'r-Rida, vol.۱, pp.۷۲-۷۳; al-Bihar, vol.۴۸, p.۲۱۰; Takmilatu 'r-rijal, vol.۲, p.۳۵۵; Mu‘jam Rijali 'l-hadith, vol.۱۵, pp.۱۸۲-۳.

travel- ling to Iraq and that his uncle ‘Ali ibn Ja‘far also became aware of his plans, especially in light of what has been quoted earlier from Ibn Khida‘ that "Musa al-Kazim (‘a.s.), used to fear his nephew, Muhammad ibn Isma‘il, and showed kindness towards him while he never ceased plotting against him with the ‘Abbasid sultan," This testimony shows that this was not the first attempt of slandering the Imam by Muhammad ibn Isma‘il; instead it was last in the series of slanders and accusations against the Imam.

This is confirmed also by the statement of Ibn‘Anabah, the famous genealogist, "And this Muhammad slandered his uncle many times in presence of Harun ar-Rashid."(۱)I say: What probably prompted Muhammad [ibn Isma‘il] to do so is that he intended to mislead his uncle ‘Ali ibn Ja‘far into the belief that the "Muhammad" being mentioned in reports or rumours as the source of slandering al-Kazim (‘a.s.) in presence of Harun is his own brother Muhammad ibn Ja‘far and not his nephew Muhammad ibn Isma‘il! Allah, the Most High, the Almighty has truly said: Say: "Every one acts according to his manner." (Qur’an, ۱۷:۸۴)

D. ash-Shaykhu 'l-Mufid's Theological Arguments on:

The Isma‘iliyyah: After all that has been discussed, it is time to quote our Shaykhu 'l-Mufid's theological arguments in which he has countered the various claims of the Isma‘iliyyah sect and its sub-groups.

Al-Mufid first outlined the differing opinions among the Shi‘ahs concerning the Imam after al-Imam Ja‘far as-Sadiq (‘a.s.), and then he quotes

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۱- al-Fusulu 'l-fakhriyyah, p.۱۴۳.

the sayings of those who are called Isma'iliyyah. We have already quoted him what he has mentioned above of the reports of the historians about their sub-sects. He :(r.a.), while discussing their claims and arguments, comments thus

As to the claim of the Isma'iliyyah that Isma'il, may Allah have mercy on him, was the" eldest son and that the designation must be for the eldest son, [I say that] by my life! That would be correct only if the eldest son is alive after the father; but if it is actually known(۱) that he will die during his father's lifetime and will not survive him, then their .claim is irrelevant to that situation

In this case, there is no sense in even designating such a person because it would be incorrect – designation (nass) implies that the designated person will be successor of the predecessor in his official capacity [of imamate]; now if the designated person does not survive the designator, then he cannot be a successor. So, the designation in .this case would be certainly incorrect

When Allah knew that the designated person would die before his predecessor, then His command to designate such a person would be futile and incorrect because there is neither any benefit in such an act nor any logical purpose. So, what the Isma'iliyyah .claim on basis of designation has no legs to stand on

As for their claim that the people"

۱- In case of designation of a person to imamate, in the Imamiyyah view, it is Allah, to Whom belong Might and Majesty, Who designates and informs the Prophet (s.'a.w.a.), .who had informed the Imam after him, and who, in turn, informed his successor

had accepted the designa- tion [by as-Sadiq, ‘a.s.], concerning Isma‘il, I would like to state that theirs is a false claim and an erroneous conjecture. None of our companions have accepted that Abu ‘Abdillah [as- Sadiq] (‘a.s.) has ever designated his son Isma‘il [as his successor] nor has any narrator narrated that in a non-canonical .report or in a famous report

The fact of the matter is that during Isma‘il's lifetime, people used to think that Abu ‘Abdillah [as-Sadiq] (‘a.s.) would designate him because he was the eldest of his children, specially due to the respect shown by the father to- wards the son. But when Isma‘il, may Allah have mercy be on him, died, the people's conjecture abated and they came to know that the imamate will be for other than him. The deceptive Isma‘ilis seized on the people's conjecture, made it into a fact, and claimed that a designation had actually taken place [concerning Isma‘il] even though they had not a .single report or hadith which might have been known to even a single Shi‘ah narrator

So, if their basis is just a mere claim devoid of any evidence, then it is quashed as we mentioned [above that the designation is false and meaningless when the designated .[person died before his predecessor

As for the narration from Abu ‘Abdillah [as-Sadiq] (‘a.s.), in which he said, 'No change" (bada’) occurred for Allah in any- thing as it occurred in case of Isma‘il,' that also means other than what the Isma‘iliyyah say

about the bada' in imamate. The correct meaning of this statement can be found in what has been nar- rated from Abu 'Abdillah ('a.s.) where he says, 'The Almighty Allah had twice decreed death by murder for my son Isma'il. So I prayed to Him for him, .and He prevented it from him

No change occurred for Him in anything as it occurred for Him in case of Isma'il.' The change mentioned here is regarding the death by murder, which was decreed for him, but was later removed by the prayer of as-Sadiq ('a.s.). As for the imamate, Allah cannot be associated with change in that matter; this is the unanimous view of the Imamiyyah jurists who even have a hadith on this matter from the Imams .themselves

The hadith says, 'If any change were to occur in Allah's decision, it could not happen in dismissing a prophet from prophethood or dismissing an imam from imamate or dismissing a believer from whom He has taken a commitment of faith from his faith.' Now that the issue on this hadith is also clear, it is proven that their claim for Isma'il's .designation on its basis is also groundless

As for those who believe in the imamate of Muhammad ibn Isma'il based on his" father's designation for him, [I say that] this is a contradictory view and an erroneous opinion. One who accepts that Isma'il's imamate has not been proven during the lifetime of as-Sadiq ('a.s.) since

it is impossible to have two imams after the Prophet (s.'a.w.a.) at one time, he cannot accept the imamate of Muhammad because it will be based on designa- tion by a non-imam [since his father, Isma'il, whom they claim to have been nominated (as an Imam), was not Imam himself]. Therefore, such a view is null and void by logical ".perception

As for those who claim that Abu 'Abdillah [as-Sadiq] ('a.s.), himself designated" Muhammad ibn Isma'il after the death of the latter's father, they do not have even a single report to support their view; they just say so on basis of an invalid presumption. They believe that as-Sadiq had designated his son Isma'il, and that justice demands that after the latter's death, the designation should occur for his son because he is the closest of all people to him. Since we have explained the erroneousness of their opinion about designation having occurred for Isma'il, the foundation of their .argument becomes invalid

Even if their claim about Abu 'Abdillah ('a.s.) designating his son Isma'il is proven, still their view on the designation of Muhammad ibn Isma'il would not be correct. [Their view on Muhammad's desig- nation is based on the idea that imamate is transferred from father to son because he inherits him, and not to his brothers.] Because imamate and designation are not inheritable issues like inheritance of an estate; if it were so, [then [all

the children of the [deceased] Imam would inherit equally. But since imamate is not inheritable, rather it is for a person who possesses certain qualities and whose (imamate fulfills a purpose. So this view is also proven to be invalid."(١

The Fatahiyyah: Our discussion on Isma'ilism has extended to a great length; therefore, on the issue of the Fatahiyyah and the Waqifah, I will limit myself to what has been said by our Shaykhu 'l- Mufid (r.a.), on this topic. Concerning the Fatahiyyah, :he writes

As for the Fatahiyyah, it is a clear issue; the erroneousness of their view is neither" hidden nor concealed from one who ponders upon it. They do not claim any designation on part of Abu 'Abdillah [as-Sadiq] ('a.s.) for 'Abdullah [al-Aftah]; instead they have acted upon what has been narrated that the imamate is for the eldest [surviving] son. This hadith has always been narrated in a conditional form; for example, it is said, 'Verily the imamate is for the eldest provided he does not have any '.defect in him

The Imamiyyah, who believe in the imamate of Musa ibn Ja'far ('a.s.) are unanimous in saying that 'Abdullah [al-Aftah] had defect in his religious views because he was inclined to the Murji'ites who have slandered 'Ali ('a.s.) and 'Uthman. And that Abu 'Abdillah [as-Sadiq] ('a.s.), after coming out of 'Abdullah's house, said, "'Abdullah is a big Murji'ite.' One day 'Abdullah came

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.al-Fusulu 'l-mukhtarah, vol.٢, pp.٢٥٠-٢ -١

.to his father while the latter was talking to his companions

When the father saw him, he became silent until ‘Abdullah left. When asked about his silence, he said, 'Don't you know that he is from the Murji’ites?' "Moreover, he did not possess any knowledge which would distinguish him from the general people; neither has any narration been quoted from him about the lawful and the unlawful [things], nor was he in a position to give (legal) judgments on religious matters. When he claimed imamate after his father's death, he was tested [by some people] with some .simple questions, which he could not answer

So any of the facts that we have mentioned are sufficient to prevent this person" from the position of imamate. If there had been no defect in him barring him from the imamate, then it would not be permissible for his father to not designate him. If as-Sadiq (‘a.s.) had not bypassed him, then he would have manifested his designation about ‘Abdullah; and if he had done so, then it would have been quoted and would have been well known among his companions. The inability of the Fatahiyyah in producing a text designating ‘Abdullah is a sufficient evidence for the erroneousness (of their view."(١

The Waqifah

:Mufid (r.a.), writes

After what we have described [concerning the division over concerning this group," ash-Shaykhu l'Isma‘il and ‘Abdullah al-Aftah], the Imamiyyah continued to follow the system of imamate until the death of Musa ibn Ja‘far (‘a.s.). Upon his death, they were divided into

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.Ibid., p.٢۵٣ -١

groups. The majority of them accepted the imamate of Abu 'l-Hasan ar-Rida ('a.s.), .believed in the nass concerning him, and followed the ideal path

A group of Shi'ahs believed in waqf(١) with Abu 'l- Hasan Musa [al-Kazim] ('a.s.), claimed that he is alive and that he is the Awaited al-Mahdi. Some from this group believed that al-Imam al-Kazim had died, and that he will be raised up again, and that .[he is the Qaim after that [i.e., after his death

The Waqifah differ among them concerning ar-Rida ('a.s.), after the death of his" father Abu 'l-Hasan Musa ('a.s.). Some of them say that they [i.e., ar-Rida and the latter Imams, 'a.s.] are the successors of Abu 'l-Hasan [al-Kazim] ('a.s.), his officers and judges until the time of his appearance; and that they are neither imams themselves nor have they ever claimed imamate. Others say that they [i.e., ar-Rida and the latter Imams,'a.s.] are misguided, mistaken and unjust; and they say horrendous things particularly about ar-Rida ('a.s.), and even accuse him and his successors !of kufr

A group, which was on the truth, isolated itself by such ridiculous beliefs! They even denied the imprisonment and death of Abu 'l-Hasan [al-Kazim], ('a.s.), and believed that it was all a fantasy of the people; they claim that he is living in occultation, and he is the Mahdi. They also believe that he appointed Muhammad ibn Bishr,(٢) a client of Banu Asad, as incharge of his affairs. They believed in ghuluww (exaggeration), in relaxation of

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١- Translator's Note: "Waqf" means stopping. It means that in their belief in imamate,] the Waqifah stopped at al-Imam al-Kazim ('a.s.) whom they considered as their last [.Imam. The term: waqifah, as a name for this group, is derived from waqf

٢- The correct name is: Muhammad ibn Bashir.

.shari‘ah restrictions, and in transmigration of souls

The Waqifah cling, in their beliefs, to some ahadith that they have narrated from Abu" ‘Abdillah [as-Sadiq] (‘a.s.). For example, they say that when Musa ibn Ja‘far (‘a.s.) was born, Abu ‘Abdillah (‘a.s.) went to Hamidah al-Barbariyyah, the mother of Musa (‘a.s.), and said, 'O Hamidah! Congratulations! Congratulations! The kingdom has come into your house.' They also say that when he was asked about the Qaim [i.e., the Awaited al-Mahdi], he answered, 'His name is same as that of the barber's razor.' [The razor in [.Arabic is known as: musa

In response to this sect, we may ask: 'What is the difference between you and the" Nawusiyyah (the group that stopped with Abu ‘Abdillah [as-Sadiq, ‘a.s.]); the Kaysaniyyah (the group that stopped with Abu 'l-Qasim [Muhammad] Ibn al-Hanafiyyah [may Allah have mercy upon him], the son of al-Imam ‘Ali, [‘a.s.]); the Mufawwidah (the group that rejects the death of al- Imam al-Husayn [‘a.s.], and yet believes that he was killed [in Karbala’]); the Sabaiyyah (the group that rejects the death of al- Imam ‘Ali [‘a.s.], and claims that he is alive); and the Muham- madiyyah (the group that rejects the death of the Messenger of Allah [s.‘a.w.a.], and claims that he is alive)?' Whatever they use to shatter the beliefs of the groups that we have mentioned here, that same argument will also shatter their belief and prove their own .falsehood

As for the first hadith that they have mentioned, we"

:say

What prevents you from believing that what as-Sadiq (‘a.s.), meant by "the kingdom"' could be the imamate over mankind, the right of obedience of an imam over the people, and the authority of legislation [i.e., not the kingdom in the sense of political and governmental authority which was availed for none except al-Imam ‘Ali during ?[his caliphate and al-Imam al- Mahdi (‘a.s.), when he appears

What proof is there in his statement to Hamidah that "The kingdom has entered your home" concerning the designation for his son or that he will rise [at the end of time] with the sword? Have you not heard the Almighty Allah saying: . . . We have, indeed, given to Ibrahim's children the Book and the Wisdom, and we have given them a grand Kingdom (۴:۵۴). There, the Almighty meant the kingdom of religion and excellence over the world. [This interpretation is clearly supported by the next verse: Some of them (i.e., of those who were granted a portion of the Book) are those who believed in it and some of them are those who turned away from it, and hell is '[.sufficient to burn

As for their narration that when as-Sadiq (‘a.s.), was asked about the name of the" Qaim, he said that his name will be same as that of the barber's razor, we say: If it is a correct narration – even though it is not a well known hadith – then we say that as-Sadiq (‘a.s.), was actually indicating the

one who will rise to the position of imamate after himself, and not the one who will rise with sword [i.e., the Awaited al-Mahdi, ‘a.s.], because we know as a fact that each Imam rises to the position of leadership after his predecessor. So, the proof you cling ?to is nothing but blind- ness of heart

Moreover, it can be said to them: 'What is the proof for the imamate of Abu 'l-Hasan" Musa (‘a.s.)? What is the evidence that his father designated him as a successor?' To whatever proof they cling to for this, we can show to them a similar proof on the imamate of ‘Ali ar-Rida (‘a.s.) and the certainity of the designation made (by his father, ‘a.s.), in his favour; [and it could be more correct to say that: "and the certainity of the designation by his father on him (‘a.s.)"]; and this is something that they cannot find an !escape from it

As for those who believe that ar-Rida (‘a.s.), and his suc- cessors were the agents of" Abu 'l-Hasan Musa (‘a.s.), and that they have not claimed the imamate for themselves, it should be known that this is a false statement, which does not deserve consideration to reject an obvious fact [i.e., in rejection of what has been approved of the fact that they were claiming imamate for themselves, indipendantly, not that they were claiming to have deputyship and represantation from the Imam]; 'and not all the Shi‘ahs of these people and other non-Shi‘ahs are from

?[" '.the pure Zaydiyyah

This sentence is somewhat confusing, per- haps it means: 'And not all these people are the Shi‘ahs of the Imams (‘a.s.), but among them there are non-Shi‘ahs of the pure Zaydiyyah.' Anyhow, this is the meaning ash-Shaykhu 'l-Mufid (r.a.), wanted to [.clearify, and it is attested to by his own following statement

And whoever study the view carefully, will certainly realize that they ascribe" imamate to themselves [without firmly believing in it wholeheartedly] and that the callers to such affair [imamate] are of their own elite among the people [for they are the ones who embrace such sects, not the common followers among the people who .[simply follow them blindly and without a firm belief

There is no difference between these sects in their falsehood and the isolated sect of" the Kaysaniyyah who claimed that al-Hasan and al-Husayn (‘a.s.), were the agents of Muhammad Ibn al-Hanafiyyah, and that the people had not paid allegiance to the two as Imams [but just as agents of Ibn al-Hanafiyyah]! The falsehood of this statement is .obvious and does not need any elaboration

As for the Bishriyyah [sic. it should be al-Bashiriyyah, the followers of Muhammad ibn" Bashir], the evidence of the death of Abu 'l-Hasan [al-Kazim] (‘a.s.), the proof of the imamate of ar-Rida (‘a.s.), baselessness of the idea of incarnation, the union of the souls and the necessity of jurisdic injuctions [the neces- sity for people to adhere to the injuctions of the shari‘ah and live according to them, without being

discarded as those people claim], falsehood of exaggeration and transmigration of souls collectively as well as singularly prove the futility of their ideas."(1)

1- al-Fusulu 'l-mukhtarah, vol.٢, pp.٢٥٣-٦.

About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ٩

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ٢٠٠٧, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

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Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field

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replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

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.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

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:Appreciation

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Isfahan, Abdorazaq St, Haj Mohammad JafarAbadei Alley, Shahid Mohammad HasanTavakkoly Alley, Number plate ۱۲۹, first floor
Website: www.ghbook.ir
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